

The Arabian Nights

1877

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Dms.", is positioned above the printed text.

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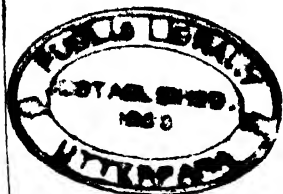
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THE

ARABIAN NIGHTS.



It is written (but to God alone belongeth true knowledge and wisdom) in the chronicles of the Sassanians, those ancient monarchs of Persia, who extended their empire over the continent and islands of India, beyond the Ganges, and almost to China; that there once lived an illustrious prince of that powerful house, who was as much beloved by his subjects for his wisdom and prudence, as he was feared by the surrounding states, from the report of his bravery, and the reputation of his hardy and well disciplined army. He had two sons: the elder, called Schahriar, was endowed with all the virtues of his father, nor was Schahzenan, the younger, less deserving of praise.

This king, after a reign as glorious as it was long, sank into the tomb of his ancestors, and Schahriar ascended the throne. Although his brother was excluded by the laws of the empire from all share in the government, and became nothing more than a subject, yet the exalted and magnificent situation of Schahriar gave rise to no envious or discontented thoughts: his whole endeavour was to please and make Schahriar happy. This was by no means a difficult task. The sultan, who was always fond of his brother, was delighted with his attention; and wishing that he should partake of his own power and wealth, he bestowed on him the kingdom of Great Tartary. Schahzenan went immediately and took possession of his empire, and fixed his residence at Samarcand, the chief city.

These two kings had been separated about ten years, when Schahriar, ardent^{ly} wishing to see his brother, determined to send an ambassador to him, with an invitation to his court. For this purpose he fixed on his first vizier, who went with a splendid and appropriate retinue. When he approached Samarcand, Schahzenan, being acquainted with his arrival, immediately went out to meet him, with all his court most magnificently dressed for the occasion; so great was the honour paid to the minister of the sultan. The king of Tartary received him with signs of great joy; and instantly inquired after the sultan, his brother. Having satisfied his curiosity, the vizier unfolded the purpose of his embassy. Schahzenan, who was much affected at the kindness and recollection of his brother, then addressed the vizier in these words:—

“Sage vizier, the sultan, my brother, does me too much honour; he could not propose anything more agreeable to me. It is impossible that his wish to see me can exceed my anxious desire of again beholding him; time has not weakened my regard any more than his. My kingdom is tranquil, and I require only ten days to prepare for my departure: for this short time you need not take the trouble to enter the city; pitch your tents, and remain in this place: I will take care and order every refreshment, and accommodation for you and

your whole train." This was immediately done; and scarcely had the king returned to his palace, when the vizier saw an immense quantity of all sorts of provisions arrive, accompanied with rare and valuable presents.

In the mean time Schahzenan made every preparation for his journey. He despatched with celerity his most pressing business, established a regency to govern the kingdom during his absence, putting a minister, on whose abilities and fidelity he had the firmest reliance, at the head of it. At the end of ten days every thing was ready; he took a tender leave of the queen, his consort, and accompanied by such officers as he had appointed to attend him, left Samarcand in the evening. He proceeded directly to a royal pavilion, which had been erected near the vizier's tent. Schahzenan remained in conversation with the ambassador, till about midnight; but wishing once again to embrace his queen, whom he tenderly loved, he returned privately to the palace, and went directly to her apartment. She, not expecting his return, had received into her chamber one of the lowest officers of the household. They had been in bed some time, and were both sunk in the deepest sleep.

The king, thinking how agreeably the queen, of whose affection he had no doubt, would be surprised at his unexpected return, entered the chamber without making any noise. Conceive, then, his astonishment, at seeing, by the lights, which are always hung in the royal apartments, another man in her arms. He stood for an instant motionless, almost doubting his own eyes. Being however too certain of the truth, "Have I then," said he to himself, "scarcely left my palace, or gone from under the walls of Samarcand, before they dare thus to disgrace me? Wretch! your crime shall not go unrequited. As king, it is my duty to punish the crimes that are committed within my states; as an offended husband, I ought to sacrifice you to my just resentment." The unfortunate monarch, yielding to his first fury, drew his scimitar, and approaching the bed, with one stroke changed their sleep into death: then taking them up one after the other, he threw them from the window into the foss that surrounded the palace.

Having thus satisfied his revenge, he went from the city as he entered, and retired to his pavilion. On his arrival, without relating what had passed to any one, he ordered the tents to be struck, and began his journey. Every thing was soon ready, and it was scarcely daylight when they commenced their march to the sound of drums and other instruments. The whole train were filled with joy, except the king, who could think of nothing but his queen's infidelity, as it was the spot where all the fêtes and splendid entertainments of the court were given; and it was now even increased in splendour by new and brilliant ornaments.

When he approached the capital of the Indies, he perceived the sultan Schahriar and all his court coming out to greet him. What joyful sensations arose in their breasts at this fraternal meeting! They alighted, and ran into each other's arms; and after a thousand expressions of regard, they remounted, and entered the city amidst the acclamations of the surrounding multitude. The sultan conducted the king, his brother, to a palace, which had been prepared for him. It communicated by a garden with his own; and was even more magnificent, as it was the spot where all the fêtes and splendid entertainments of the court were given; and it was now even increased in splendour by new and brilliant ornaments.

Schahriar immediately left the king of Tartary, in order that he might have time to bathe and change his dress; on his return from the bath he went immediately to him again. They seated themselves on a sofa, and as the courtiers, through respect, stood at a considerable distance, these two brothers conversed with each other at their ease, after so long an absence; and seemed even more united by affection than blood. They ate together at supper, and

after their repast, they again conversed, till Schahriar, perceiving the night far advanced, left his brother to repose.

The unfortunate Schahzenan retired to his couch ; but if the presence of the sultan had for a while suspended his grief, it now returned with redoubled force. Instead of enjoying that rest he was so much in want of, the most agonizing reflections dwelt upon his mind. Every circumstance of his queen's infidelity presented itself to his imagination with such violence, that it almost deprived him of his reason. Not being able to sleep, he arose, and giving way to these afflicting thoughts, they made such a deep impression of sorrow on his countenance, that the sultan could not fail of remarking it. "What cause of complaint," thought he, "can the king of Tartary have? He cannot object to the reception I have given him. I have received him as a brother, whom I tenderly love; and I cannot reproach myself with any thing. Perhaps he feels a regret at the distance he is from his kingdom and his consort? If that indeed afflicts him, I must hasten the presents I am preparing for him, that he may set out, whenever he pleases, on his return to Samarcand." This he immediately set about; and sent a part of the presents even the next day. These were composed of every thing rare, singular, and valuable, that India could produce. In the mean time the sultan endeavoured to amuse his brother by every species of pleasure; but the most splendid entertainments and gayest fêtes only served to increase his melancholy.

Schahriar having one morning given orders for a grand hunting party, at the distance of two days' journey from the city, in a part of the country where there were plenty of stags, Schahzenan requested permission to remain in his palace, excusing himself on account of a slight indisposition. The sultan, wishing to please him, gave him his choice, and went with all his court to partake of the sport. The king of Tartary was no sooner alone, than he shut himself up in his apartment. He seated himself at a window, that looked over the garden; the view from thence, and the melody of the multitudes of birds, which had chosen that beautiful spot for their retreat, must have excited pleasing sensations in his breast, if he had been capable of feeling them: but totally absorbed and overwhelmed with the dreadful recollection of the queen's infamous conduct, he more frequently lifted his eyes to heaven, complaining of his wretched fate, than fixed them on the beauties of the spot.

He remained thus occupied with his own melancholy thoughts, when his attention was roused by the following event. A secret door of the sultan's palace suddenly opened, and out came twenty females; in the midst of whom was the sultana, who was easily distinguished by her majestic air. This princess, supposing the king of Tartary was engaged in the chase, approached without fear, even to the very windows of his apartments. The prince, wishing through curiosity to observe them, placed himself at the window so as to see every thing that passed, without being at all seen. They who accompanied the sultana immediately threw off the long robes in which they had first appeared, and which entirely hid their faces and figures. How great was his astonishment, when he saw, in this party, which he supposed to consist only of women, ten blacks, each of whom selected a mistress. Nor did the sultana, on her part, remain long without her lover. Clapping her hands, she called out, "Masoud, Masoud!" and another black instantly descended from a tree, and ran towards her.

Modesty will not allow us to enter into a detail of their conduct, nor is it necessary. Schahzenan saw enough to convince him, that his brother had no less reason to complain than himself. The amusements of this amorous party lasted till midnight: they then bathed altogether in the large pond which formed one of the chief ornaments of the garden, and having put on their

habits, they returned to the palace by the same secret door, while Masoud, who had come over the wall of the garden, escaped in the same way.

The whole of these transactions, which passed under his own eyes, caused many reflections in the king's mind. "How absurd," said he, "to think that my misfortune is singular and uncommon! It is the inevitable destiny of all husbands, since even the sultan my brother, the sovereign of so many states, the greatest monarch in the world, cannot avoid it. What weakness then in me to be thus affected at my own lot, and remain a prey to melancholy: it shall be so no longer. The recollection of a misfortune, so common to all men, shall vex me no more, nor disturb my repose." In short, from this moment he ceased to repine. He had delayed going to supper, till the whole of this extraordinary scene was over; he then ordered it to be brought, and ate with a better appetite than he had before done, since his departure from Samarcand, and even enjoyed the fine concert performed while he sat at table.

From this time he resumed his former good humour, and when he heard of the sultan's return, he went and paid his respects to him, with an air of gaiety and satisfaction. Schahriar, at first, took no notice of this change. He merely hinted gently at the refusal of his brother to accompany him to the chase; and without allowing him to reply, he gave him an account of the great number of stags and other animals they had hunted, and the pleasure it had afforded. Schahzenan, having listened with great attention, took his turn to speak. As melancholy or chagrin no longer clouded his mind, his natural vivacity and wit became apparent in a thousand lively sallies.

The sultan, who expected to find him in the same state in which he had left him, was delighted with his gaiety. "I thank Heaven, my brother," he cried, "for the happy change which has taken place during my absence. I am indeed truly rejoiced at it; but I have one favour to request, and I trust you will not refuse me." "What can I refuse you?" replied Schahzenan; "you may command me in every thing. Speak; I am impatient to know what you wish of me." "Since you have been at my court," resumed the sultan, "I have only seen you a prey to the most gloomy melancholy, which I have tried, but in vain, to dissipate by every species of amusement in my power. I thought that your grief might arise from the distance you were from your kingdom; I imagined also, that love might have its share, and that the queen of Samarcand, whom you had selected for her incomparable beauty, was partly the cause. I know not whether my conjectures were right or wrong, and it was for this very reason, and from the fear of displeasing you, that I did not importune you. Soon after, without my having in the least contributed to it, I find you, on my return from a hunting party, in the highest spirits; your mind quite free from that dark cloud which hung over it, and prevented all enjoyment. Tell me then, I entreat you, why you were so melancholy, and why you are so no longer?"

At this speech the king of Tartary mused for some time, meditating what to answer. At length he said, "You are my sultan, and my master, yet do not, I beg of you, compel me to give you the satisfaction you demand." "Yes, yes, my brother," cried the sultan, "you must comply; I wish it, do not therefore refuse me." Schahzenan could no longer resist his entreaties. "Well then, my brother," said he, "since you command it, you shall be satisfied. He then related the infidelity of the queen of Samarcand; and when he had finished his recital, "This," continued he, "was the cause of my melancholy! was it not a sufficient one?" "Oh, my brother," cried the sultan, in a voice that showed how much he sympathized with him, "what a dreadful tale have you unfolded to me! with what impatience have I listened to you! I praise you for having punished the wretches; and no one can reproach you for it, as

it is only just. And I own, had I been in your place, I should perhaps have been less easily satisfied. I should not have been contented with taking away the life of one woman, but should have sacrificed a thousand to my resentment. I am not astonished at your melancholy; the cause was too powerful and acute for you not to yield to it. Heavens! what an adventure: your fate surely is most singular, nor can have ever happened to any one besides. Since, however, it has pleased God to afford you consolation, and as I am sure that it is equally as well founded as was the cause of your grief, inform me, I beg, of that also, and make me acquainted with the whole."

Upon this point Schahzenan was more difficult than before, from the interest his brother seemed to take in it; but he was obliged to comply with his earnest request: "I am going to obey you," said he, "since you absolutely require it; yet I fear my compliance will cause you more pain than even I have felt; but you must attach the fault to yourself alone, since you compel me to reveal what I wished to remain buried in eternal oblivion." "What you tell me," interrupted Schahriar, "only heightens my curiosity; hasten to discover this secret, whatever may be its nature." The king of Tartary, being no longer able to prevent it, detailed the whole that he had seen; the disguises of the blacks, the conduct of the sultana and her women; nor was Masoud forgotten. — "After having witnessed this infamous scene," continued he, "I began to think that all women were naturally of this disposition, and were unable to resist their inclinations. I was no sooner of this opinion, than it appeared to me a great weakness in any man to suffer his happiness to rest on their fidelity. This reflection produced many others, and I was at length convinced that it was best to think of it no more. It has cost me some trouble, but I have accomplished it; and if you are of my opinion, you will follow my example."

Notwithstanding the excellence of this advice, the sultan was unable to follow it. "What," said he, furiously, "is it possible that the sultana of the Indies is capable of such base prostitution? No, no, brother, I cannot believe what you have told me, unless I were to see it myself. It is a deception; you must have been imposed upon; and it is too important a matter not to require positive proof." "If," replied Schahzenan, "you wish to be witness to the fact, it will not be difficult to accomplish it. You have only to give orders for another hunting party, and after we have both left the city, with the court in our train, we will remain in our pavilions during the day; and at night we will return alone into my apartment. I am too certain that you will, during the next day, observe what I have before seen." The sultan approved of the plan, and immediately ordered the party, so that the pavilions were erected that very day, in the appointed place.

The two princes set out on the following morning with all their train. They arrived at the camp, and remained there till night. Schahriar then called his grand vizier, and, without discovering his intention, commanded him to take his place during his absence, and to suffer no person to leave the camp upon any account whatever. As soon as the sultan had given these orders, he and his brother got on their horses, passed unknown through the camp, entered the city, and went directly to the palace, occupied by Schahzenan. They then retired to rest, but rose early in the morning, and took their station at the same window, whence the king of Tartary had observed the former scene with the blacks. They enjoyed the freshness of the morning, for the sun had not yet risen; and during their conversation they frequently cast their eyes towards the secret door. At length it was opened, and, to sum up all in a few words, the sultana, with her women, and the ten disguised blacks, instantly appeared as before, and having called Masoud, the sultan was soon too fatally convinced of his disgraceful misfortune. "Oh God!" he cried, "what indignity, what

horror ! is it possible, that the wife of so powerful a sovereign as I am, can be capable of such infamy ? What prince, after this, can dare to call himself happy ? Ah, my brother," added he, embracing him, "let us renounce the world ; fidelity is banished from it, and, if it flatters us one moment, it betrays us the next. Let us leave our dominions, and all the pomp that surrounds us, and in foreign kingdoms pass an obscure life, and endeavour to conceal our disgrace." Schahzenan did not approve of this plan ; but seeing the agony in which his brother then was, he dared not oppose it. "I have no other will than yours, my brother," replied he, "I am ready to follow you wherever you please ; but promise me that you will return whenever you meet with any one who shall be more unfortunate than we are." "I do promise you," replied the sultan, "but I very much doubt whether we shall ever meet with such a one." "I am of a different opinion," added the king of Tartary, "and our journey may be shorter than you expect." They then departed secretly from the palace, and took a different road from that by which they came. They travelled as long as it was light, and passed the first night under some trees. As soon as the morning broke they got up, and resumed their journey, till they came to a beautiful meadow near the sea-shore, along which, at certain distances, were some very large and thick trees. They seated themselves under one of them to rest, and take some refreshment, during which the infidelity of their respective queens became the subject of their discourse.

They had not long conversed together, when they heard a most horrible noise very near them, towards the sea ; and a sudden loud and lamentable cry, that filled them with dread. The sea immediately began to open, and they observed an immense black column rising out of it, whose top seemed lost in the clouds. This sight redoubled their fears ; they instantly got up, and climbed to the top of a tree, which appeared likely to conceal them. They were scarcely got there, when looking towards the spot from whence the noise came, and where the sea had opened, they observed that the black column unfolded itself, as it were, and approached the shore. For a moment they could not conceive what it was, but it very soon became evident.

It was one of those wicked genii who are avowed enemies to mankind. He was black and hideous, and in form like an immense giant. He carried on his head a large glass case, secured by four locks of bright steel. With this, he came into the meadow, and set it down at the foot of the very tree in which the princes were hidden. They, knowing the great danger they were in, gave themselves up for lost.

This wicked genius then sat down near the case, and having opened it with four keys, which were suspended from his girdle, a female, superbly dressed, of a fine figure and incomparable beauty, immediately came out. The monster made her sit by his side, and casting an amorous look at her, he said, "Lady, thou most accomplished of all that are admired for their beauty, whom I carried away on the very day of thy nuptials, and to whom I have ever since been constant, suffer me to repose a few moments near thee ; feeling myself overcome with sleep, I sought this place to indulge in a little rest." Having said this, he let his immense head fall on her lap ; then stretching out his legs, which extended almost to the sea, he immediately fell asleep, and began to snore, till the very shore echoed with the noise.

The lady, raising her eyes by chance, perceived the princes in the tree, and immediately made a sign with her hand for them to come down without making any noise. When they found they were thus discovered, their fears became more violent. They entreated her, by signs, to permit them to remain where they were ; but she, on the contrary, having gently lifted up the giant's head and placed it softly on the ground, got up, and said to them in a low but

animated voice, "Descend; it is absolutely necessary that you should come down to me." In vain did they endeavour, by various methods, to make her comprehend how much they dreaded her hideous companion:—"Come down," continued she, in the same tone, "for if you hesitate, I will wake him, and bid him destroy you."

These words so much alarmed them, that they began to descend, though with all possible precaution. When they were on the ground, the lady took them by the hand, and leading them among some trees, she directly made a most urgent and strange proposal to them. At first they refused her; but she obliged them, by fresh threats, to comply with her wishes. Having gratified her inclination, she observed, that they had each a ring on their fingers, which she requested of them. She had not sooner received them, than, taking a small box out of a parcel, that contained her wardrobe, she drew from it a string of rings of various sorts, and showing it to the princes, said, "Do you know what this means?" "We do not," they answered, "but it remains for you to inform us." "They are," she replied, "the rings of all those on whom I have bestowed my favours. There are exactly ninety-eight, and yours, which I have requested for that purpose, will make a hundred, which I wished to accomplish. Observe," continued she, "the hundred lovers that I have now had, in spite of all the precaution and vigilance of this wretch, who never quits me. Let him shut me up in this glass case, and conceal me at the bottom of the sea, if he please. I will not fail to make his caution useless. You may know by this, that when once a female has formed any scheme, neither husband nor lover can prevent its accomplishment. Men had better put no restraint upon women, and it would be the means of preserving them chaste." The lady, having said this, added then rings to the list. She then seated herself as before, replaced the head of the genius upon her lap, and made a sign to the princes to depart.

They immediately retreated by the same road they came and when they were out of sight of the lady and her formidable companion, Schahriar said to Schahzenan, "What think you, brother, of this adventure, which hath happened to us? Has not this genius got a truly faithful mistress? Do you not agree, that nothing can equal the malice of women?" "I do," replied the king of Tartary, "and you must allow also, that the genius has much more to complain of, and is more unfortunate than we are. Since, therefore, we have found what we were in search of, let us return to our dominions, and not suffer this to prevent us from forming a fresh marriage. With respect to myself, I know by what method I expect to preserve inviolate the fidelity I think due to me. I will not now explain myself, but you shall one day learn; and I have no doubt, but you will follow my example." The sultan was of the same opinion as his brother, and pursuing their journey, they arrived, towards the end of the third night, at the camp.

The news of the sultan's return being known, the courtiers hastened early in the morning to the royal pavilion. He received them in a more lively manner than usual, and gratified all of them by his gracious reception. He then declared, that he should proceed no farther, and ordering them to mount, he immediately set out on his return.

The sultan was no sooner arrived than he hastened to the apartments of the sultana. He ordered her to be bound, and having delivered her to his grand vizier, he commanded him to have her strangled. This sentence was executed by him, without inquiring into the crime for which she suffered. The indignant prince did not stop here; he beheaded all the sultana's women with his own hand. After this rigorous proceeding, being persuaded that a truly virtuous woman did not exist, he resolved, in order to prevent a possibility of infidelity

for the future, to marry every night, and have his lady strangled in the morning. Having imposed this cruel law upon himself, he swore to observe it immediately on the departure of the king, his brother; who soon after took his leave, and returned to his own kingdom, loaded with the most magnificent presents.

When Schahzenan was gone, the sultan failed not to order his grand vizier to bring him the daughter of one of his generals. The vizier obeyed; and the sultan, having passed the night with her, delivered her into the hands of the vizier for execution, and commanded him to procure another against the following night. However repugnant these commands might be to the vizier, he was obliged to submit. He then brought the sultan the daughter of a sybaltein officer, who, as usual, suffered death the next morning. The next was the daughter of a citizen. And thus every day was a maiden married, and every day a wife sacrificed.

The report of this unexampled inhumanity spread a universal consternation through the city. In one place a wretched father was in tears for the loss of his daughter, in another, the air resounded with the groans of tender mothers, who dreaded lest the same fate should attend their offspring. In this manner, instead of the praises and blessings, with which, till now, they loaded their monarch, all his subjects poured out imprecations on his head.

The grand vizier, who, as has been mentioned, was the unwilling agent of this horrid injustice, had two daughters; the elder was called Scheherazade, and the youngest Dinarzade. The latter was by no means deficient in merit; but Scheherazade was possessed of a degree of courage beyond her sex, joined to an extent of knowledge and degree of penetration, that was truly astonishing. She had read much, and was possessed of so great a memory, that she never forgot anything once learned. She had applied, also, with much success, to philosophy, to medicine, to history, and to the arts; and made better verses than the most celebrated poet of the time. Besides this, her beauty was incomparable; and all these valuable qualities were crowned by her virtuous disposition.

The vizier was passionately fond of so deserving a daughter. As they were conversing together one day, she addressed him in these words: "I have a favour to ask of you, my father; and I entreat you not to refuse me." "I will not refuse you," replied he, "provided the request be just and reasonable." "It is impossible," added Scheherazade, "to be more just, as you will judge from the motives I have in making it. My design is to put a stop to this dreadful barbarity, which the sultan exercises over the inhabitants of this city. I wish to dispel the just apprehension, which all mothers entertain for the safety of their daughters." "Your intention, my child," said the vizier, "is very noble; but the evil which you wish to cure seems to me without a remedy; how would you set about it?" "Since, by your means," replied Scheherazade, "the sultan celebrates a fresh marriage every day, I conjure you, by the tender affection you have for me, to procure me the honour of his bed." This speech filled the vizier with horror. "O God!" cried he, eagerly, "have you lost your senses, my daughter, that you make me so dangerous a request? Do you know, that the sultan has solemnly sworn, he will receive no one to his bed, but for one night; and that he regularly orders her to be carried to execution in the morning? Can you then think of being allied to him? Recollect to what your indiscreet zeal exposes you." "Yes, my father," replied this virtuous damsel, "I am aware of the danger I run, but it does not deter me from my purpose. If I die, my death will be glorious; and if I succeed, I shall render my country an important service." "No, no," replied the vizier, "do not suppose, that anything you can urge will induce me to comply with your wishes, and put you in so dreadful a situation. Can I, alas!

obey the sultan, when he orders me to plunge a poniard into your bosom. What horrible employment for a father ! If you do not yourself fear death, at least hesitate to inflict on me the pain of being the wretched instrument, and imbruing my hand with your blood." Still, my father," said Scheherazade, "I implore you to grant my request." "Your obstinacy," replied he, "excites my anger ; why can you wish thus to rush to your own destruction ? They, who do not look forward to the end of a dangerous enterprise, know not how to bring it to a fortunate conclusion. The same thing will, I fear, happen to you, which did to the ass, who was well off, yet could not keep so." "What happened to the ass ?" replied Scheherazade. "Listen to me," answered the vizier, "and I will relate the story."

THE FABLE OF THE ASS, THE OX, AND THE LABOURER.

A VERY rich merchant had several houses in the country, where he bred a considerable number of cattle of various descriptions. It happened that he went to reside on one of his estates, with his wife and children, for the purpose of superintending some improvements. This merchant understood the language of beasts ; but it was only on the condition of not imparting what he heard to any one, under the penalty of death. Consequently he was prevented from communicating the knowledge he might thus acquire.

He had put by chance an ox and an ass into the same stall ; and being one day seated near them, he heard the ox say to the ass : "How happy do I think your lot, when I consider the repose you enjoy, and the little labour you are required to perform. A servant looks after you with great care, washes you, feeds you with fine sifted barley, and gives you fresh and clean water ; your greatest task is to carry the merchant, our master, when he has occasion to take a short journey ; but for that, your whole life would be passed in idleness. How different now is the manner in which they treat me : my condition is as unfortunate as yours is pleasant. It is scarcely midnight, when they yoke me to a plough, with which they make me turn up the ground the whole day ; while the labourer, who is constantly behind, continually urges me on with his goad. The weight and force of the plough, too, chafes all the skin from my neck. When I have worked from morning till night, they give me unwhole some dirty beans, or even something worse ; and to complete my misery, after having been obliged to satisfy my hunger upon such uninviting food, I am compelled to pass the night in a filthy stall. Have I not then reason to envy your lot ?"

The ass suffered the ox to say what he pleased, without interruption ; and when he had finished, the former addressed him in these words : "In truth, they are not much out when they call you an idiot, since you pass your life just as they please, and cannot take thought on your own behalf. What benefit, pray, do you derive from all your ingenuities ? You even destroy yourself for the ease, pleasure, and profit of those who do not thank you for it. Believe me, they would not treat you thus, if you possessed as much courage as strength. When they come to tie you to the manger, what resistance, pray, do you ever make ? Do you ever put them in mind of your horns ? Do you ever show your anger by stamping on the ground with your feet ? Why don't you terrify them with your bellowing ? Nature has given you the means of making yourself respected, and yet you neglect to use them. They bring you bad beans and chaff ; well, do not eat them, smell at them only, and leave them. Thus, if you follow my plans, you will soon perceive a change, which you will thank me for." The ox took the advice of the ass very kindly, and

declared himself much obliged to him. "My dear companion," added he, "I will not fail to do as you bid me, and you shall see how I acquit myself." After this conversation, of which the merchant lost not a word, they were silent.

Early the next morning the labourer came for the ox, and yoked him to the plough, and set him to work as usual. The latter, who had not forgotten the advice he had received, was very unruly the whole day; and at night, when the labourer attempted to fasten him as usual to the stall, the malicious animal, instead of turning his horns towards him for that purpose, began to be outrageous, and ran roaring back; he even put down his horns to strike him; in short, he did exactly as the ass had advised him. The day following, when the man came, he found the manger still full of beans and chaff, and the ox lying on the ground, with his legs stretched out, and making a strange groaning. The labourer thought him very ill, and that it would be useless to take him to work; he therefore immediately went and informed the merchant of it.

The latter perceived that the bad advice of the ass had been followed; and in order to punish him as he deserved, he told the labourer to go and take the ass instead of the ox, and not fail to give him plenty of exercise. The man obeyed; and the ass was obliged to drag the plough the whole day, which tired him the more, because he was unaccustomed to it; besides which, he was so handsomely beaten that he could scarcely support himself when he came back.

In the mean time the ox was very well satisfied; he eat all that was in his rack, and rested the whole day. He was highly pleased with himself for having followed the advice of the ass, and blessed him a thousand times for the good he had procured him. As soon as he saw him return, he did not fail to repeat his thanks. The ass was so enraged at the treatment he had experienced, that he would not answer a word. "My own imprudence," said he to himself, "has alone brought this misfortune upon me. I lived happily, everything was pleasant, I had all I wished for, and I may thank myself only for this reverse. If I cannot contrive some trick to get out of this scrape, my destruction is inevitable." In saying this, his strength was so much exhausted that he fell down in his stall, half dead.

Here the grand vizier said to Scheherazadè. "You are, my child, just like this ass, and would expose yourself to destruction through a false idea of prudence and rectitude. Trust to me; and remain here in safety, without seeking your own ruin." "Sir," replied Scheherazadè, "the example which you have brought does not alter my resolution, and I shall not cease importuning you till I have obtained from you the favour of presenting me to the sultan as his consort." The vizier, finding her persist in her request, said, "Well then, since you will remain thus obstinate, I shall be obliged to treat you as the merchant I mentioned did his wife."

Being told in what a miserable state the ass was, he was curious to know what passed between him and the ox; after supper, therefore, he went out by moonlight, accompanied by his wife, and sat down near them; on his arrival, he heard the ass say to the ox, "Tell me, brother, what you mean to do when the labourer brings you food to-morrow?" "Mean to do?" replied the ox, "why, what you taught me. At first I shall begin to retreat, then put down my horns as yesterday, and pretend to be ill and almost dying." "Take care," interrupted the ass, "what you are about, lest you destroy yourself; for in coming home yesterday evening, I heard the merchant, our master, say what made me tremble for you." "What did you hear?" asked the latter; "conceal nothing from me, I entreat you." "Our master," replied the ass, "addressed his labourer in these sad words: 'Since the ox can neither eat

nor support himself, I wish him to be killed to-morrow; we will give his flesh as an alms to the poor, for God's sake; and you shall carry his skin, which will be useful, to the currier; do not, therefore, fail to send for the butcher.' This is what I heard; and the interest I take in your safety, and the friendship I have for you, induces me to mention it, and offer you my opinion on the subject. At first, when they bring you beans and chaff, get up, and begin eating directly. Our master, by this, will suppose that you have recovered, and will, without doubt, revoke the sentence for your death; in my opinion, if you act otherwise, it is all over with you."

This speech produced the intended effect; the ox was much troubled, and lowed with fear. The merchant, who had listened to every thing with great attention, burst into a fit of laughter that quite surprised his wife. "Tell me," said she, "what you laugh at, that I may join in it." "Be satisfied," he answered, "at hearing me." "No, no," she added, "I wish to know the cause." "That satisfaction," replied the husband, "I cannot afford you: I can only tell you that I laughed at what the ass said to the ox: the rest is a secret, which I must not reveal." "And why not?" asked his wife. "Because, if I tell you, it will cost me my life." "You trifle with me," added she; "this can never be true, and if you do not immediately inform me what you laughed at, I swear by Allah that we will live together no longer."

In saying this, she went back to the house in a pet, shut herself up, and cried the whole night. Her husband slept alone; and finding that she continued in the same state the next day, he said, "How foolish it is to afflict yourself in this way: the thing is not worth it, nor can it be of so much consequence to you to know it as for me to keep it concealed. Think no more of it then, I conjure you." "I shall, however, so continue to think of it," replied she, "that I shall not cease to lament till my curiosity is satisfied." "Do I not seriously tell you," added he, "that if I were to yield to your foolish importunities, it would cost me my life?" "Whatever happens rests with God," said she; "but I shall not alter my mind." "I see very plainly," answered the merchant, "it is not possible to make you submit to reason, and that your obstinacy will kill you; therefore I will call your children, that they may have the satisfaction of seeing you before you die." He then ordered his family to be present, and sent also for the parents and other relations of his wife; when they were all assembled, he explained to them his motives for calling them together, and requested them to use all their influence with his wife, and endeavour to convince her of the folly of her conduct. She rejected them all, and said she had rather die than give up this point to her husband. Each of her parents urged every argument, and used every persuasion in their power; they told her that what she wished to know could be of no consequence to her; but they could make no impression either by their authority or eloquence. When her children saw that nothing could alter her resolution, they began to lament most bitterly; the merchant himself knew not what to do. A little while afterwards he was sitting by chance at the door of his house, considering whether he should not even sacrifice himself, in order to save his wife, whom he so tenderly loved.

This merchant, my child (continued the vizier, still addressing Scheherazade), had fifty hens and only one cock, and also a very faithful dog. While he was sitting at the door, meditating what plan to pursue, he saw the dog run towards the cock, who was gallanting one of his hens, and address him in these words:—"You will not, O cock, be suffered to live long, if you are not ashamed of being thus employed to-day." The latter, strutting up to the dog, haughtily answered, "Who shall prevent my doing what I please to-day as well as at other times?" "Are you ignorant then," replied the dog, "that our master

is in great affliction? His wife wishes him to reveal a secret of such a nature, that the discovery will cost him his life; and it is feared he will be unable to resist her importunities, as the tears of one he so much loves afflict him to such a degree: we are all alarmed at the dangerous situation he is in, while you, insulting our grief, have the impertinence to divert yourself with your hens."

"Our master is a fool then," replied the cock; "he has but one wife, and cannot gain his point; while I have fifty, and do just as I please. Let him return to his senses, and he will easily get out of the embarrassment he is in."

"What would you do?" said the dog. "What?" answered the cock; "why let him only go into the room where his wife is, and, after shutting the door, take a good-sized stick, and give her a smart thrashing. I will answer for it she will soon know better, and not worry him to reveal what he ought to keep secret." The merchant no sooner heard what the cock said, than he got up, and taking rather a large stick, went to his wife, who was still weeping. Having shut the door, he applied the remedy so effectually, that she soon exclaimed, "Enough, enough, my husband, leave me, and I will never ask the question more." On hearing this, and believing that she repented of her ill-timed curiosity, he gave over beating her, and opening the door, all her family came in, heartily glad at finding her more rational; and congratulated her husband on the happy expedient he found out for the purpose. "You deserve, my daughter," added the grand vizier, "to be treated like the merchant's wife."

"Do not, sir," answered Scheherazadè, "think ill of me, if I still persist in my sentiments. The history of this woman does not shake my resolution; I could recount, on the other hand, many others which ought to persuade you not to oppose my design. Pardon me, too, if I add, that your opposition will be useless; for if paternal tenderness should refuse the request I make, I will present myself to the sultan." At length, the vizier, overcome by his daughter's firmness, yielded to her entreaties; and, although he was much afflicted at not being able to conquer her resolution, he immediately went to Schahriar, and announced to him that Scheherazadè herself would be his bride on the following night.

The sultan was much astonished at the sacrifice of the grand vizier. "Is it possible," said he, "that you can give up your own child?" "Sire," replied the vizier, "she has herself made the offer. The dreadful fate that hangs over her, does not alarm her; and she prefers, even to her existence, the honour of being the consort of your majesty, though it be but for one night." "Vizier," said the sultan, "do not deceive yourself with any hopes; for be assured, that in delivering Scheherazadè into your charge to-morrow, it will be with an order for her death; and if you disobey, your own head will be the forfeit." "Although," answered the vizier, "my heart will be distracted at fulfilling your majesty's commands, it is of no avail for human nature to lament; although I am her father, I will answer for the fidelity of this arm." Schariari accepted his minister's offer, and informed him he might bring his daughter when he pleased.

When the grand vizier carried this intelligence to Scheherazadè, she seemed as much rejoiced as if it had been of the most pleasant character: she thanked her father for obliging her so greatly; and observing him to be much afflicted, she consoled him by saying, that she hoped he would be so far from repenting her marriage with the sultan, that it would become a subject of joy to him for the remainder of his life.

She now occupied herself with the manner in which she should appear before the sultan; but before she went to the palace, she called her sister, Dinarzadè, aside, and said, "I am in great want of your assistance, my dear sister, in a

very important affair; and I hope you will not refuse me. My father is going to conduct me to the palace as the wife of the sultan. Do not let this news alarm you, but attend rather to what I say. As soon as I shall have presented myself before the sultan, I shall entreat him to suffer you to sleep in the bridal chamber that I may enjoy for the last time your company. If I obtain this favour, as I expect, remember to awaken me to-morrow morning an hour before daybreak, and address some such words as these to me:—"If you are not asleep, my sister, I beg of you, till the morning appears, to recount to me one of those delightful stories you know." I will immediately begin to tell one: and I flatter myself that by these means I shall free the kingdom from the consternation in which it is." Dinarzadè promised to do with pleasure what she required.

When the hour of retiring approached, the grand vizier conducted Scheherazadè to the palace, and after introducing her to the sultan's apartment, took his leave. They were no sooner alone, than the sultan ordered her to take off her veil. He was charmed with her beauty; but perceiving her in tears, he demanded the cause of them. "Sire," answered Scheherazadè, "I have a sister whom I tenderly love, and whose attachment to me is equally strong; I earnestly wish that she might be permitted to pass the night in this apartment, that we may again see each other, and once more take a tender farewell. Will you then consent, that I shall have the consolation of giving her this last proof of my affection?" Schahriar having agreed to it, they sent for Dinarzadè, who came directly. The sultan passed the night with Scheherazadè on an elevated couch, as was the custom among the eastern monarchs, and Dinarzadè slept at the foot of it on a mattress, prepared for the purpose.

Dinarzadè, having awoke about an hour before day, did not fail to do what her sister had ordered her. "My dear sister," she said, "if you are not asleep, I entreat you, as it will soon be light, to relate to me one of those delightful tales you know. It will, alas, be the last time I shall receive that pleasure."

Instead of returning any answer to her sister, Scheherazadè addressed these words to the sultan:—"Will your majesty permit me to indulge my sister in her request?" "Freely," replied he. Scheherazadè then desired her sister to attend, and, addressing herself to the sultan, began as follows.

THE STORY OF THE MERCHANT AND THE GENIUS.

THERE was formerly, sire, a merchant, who was possessed of great wealth, in land, merchandise, and ready money. He had a numerous set of clerks, factors, and slaves; and, from the great extent of his commercial transactions, he was from time to time obliged to take various journeys, in order to arrange his affairs in person with his correspondents. Having one day an affair of great importance to settle at a considerable distance from home, he mounted his horse, and with only a sort of cloak-bag behind him, in which he had put a few biscuits and dates, he began his journey. This provision was absolutely necessary, as he was obliged to pass over a desert, where it was impossible to procure any kind of food. He arrived without any accident at the place of his destination; and having finished his business, he set out on his return.

On the fourth day of his journey, he felt himself so incommoded by the sun, and the heated surface of the earth, that he turned out of his road, in order to rest and refresh himself under some trees, which he saw at a distance. At the foot of a large walnut-tree he perceived a very transparent and cool fountain. He immediately alighted, and tying his horse to a branch of the tree, sat down on its bank, having first taken some biscuits and dates from his little store.

While he was thus satisfying his hunger, he amused himself with throwing about the stones of the fruit with considerable velocity. When he had finished his frugal repast, he washed his hands, his face, and his feet, and repeated a prayer, like a good Mussulman.

He had hardly made an end, and was still on his knees, when he saw a Genius, white with age, and of an enormous stature, advancing towards him, with a scimitar in his hand; as soon as he was close to him, he said in a most terrible tone: "Get up, that I may kill thee with this scimitar, as thou hast caused the death of my son." He accompanied these words with a dreadful yell. The merchant, alarmed by the horrible figure of this monster, as well as the words he heard, replied in trembling accents: "Of what crime, my good lord, alas, can I have been guilty towards you, to deserve the loss of life?" "I have sworn to kill thee, as thou hast slain my son." "Good God," answered the merchant, "how can I have slain him? I do not know him, nor have I ever seen him?" "Didst thou not," replied the monster, "on thine arrival here, sit down, and take some dates from thy wallet; and after eating them didst thou not throw the stones about on all sides?" "This is all true," replied the merchant; "I do not deny it." "Well then," said the other, "I tell thee, thou hast killed my son; for while thou wast throwing about the stones, my son passed by: one of them struck him in the eye, and caused his death, and thus hast thou slain my son." "Ah, sire, forgive me," cried the merchant. "I have neither forgiveness nor mercy," added the monster; "and is it not just that he who has inflicted death should suffer it?" "I grant this; yet surely I have not done so: and even if I have, I have done so innocently, and therefore I entreat you to pardon me, and suffer me to live." "No, no," cried the Genius, still persisting in his resolution, "I must destroy thee, as thou hast done my son." At these words, he took the merchant in his arms, and having thrown him with his face on the ground, he lifted up his sabre, in order to strike off his head.

The merchant in the mean time, bathed in tears, protested his innocence, and lamenting his wife and children, tried the most persuasive means to avert his fate. The Genius, still holding up the sabre, waited however till he had ended his complaints, though it altered not his purpose. "All thy lamentations are vain," he cried; "were thine eyes to weep blood, it would not prevent my killing thee, as thou hast slain my son." "Can nothing then," replied the merchant, "soften you? Must you shed the blood of a poor innocent being?" "Yes," he added, "I am resolved."

Scheherazade, at this instant, perceiving it was day, and knowing that the sultan rose early to his prayers, and then to hold a council, broke off. "What a wonderful story," said Dinarzade, "have you pitched upon!" "The conclusion," answered Scheherazade, "is still more surprising, as you would confess, if the sultan would suffer me to live another day, and in the morning permit me to continue the relation." Schahriar, who had listened with much pleasure to the narration, determined in his own mind to wait till to-morrow, intending to order her execution after she had finished her story. Having resolved to defer her death till the following day, he arose, and having prayed, went to the council.

The grand vizier, in the mean time, was in a state of cruel suspense. Unable to sleep, he passed the night in lamenting the approaching fate of his daughter, whose executioner he was compelled to be. Dreading, therefore, in this melancholy situation, to meet the sultan, how great was his surprise in seeing him enter the council-chamber without giving him the horrible orders he expected.

The sultan spent the day, as usual, in regulating the affairs of his kingdom, and on the approach of night, retired with Scheherazade to his apartment.



THE MERCHANT AND THE GENIUS.

The next morning, before the day appeared, Dinarzadè did not fail to remind her sister: "My dear sister," she said, "if you are not asleep, I entreat you, before the morning breaks, to continue your story." The sultan did not wait for Scheherazadè to ask permission,* but said, "Finish the tale of the Genius and the merchant: I am curious to hear the end of it." [*In the original work, there are continual interruptions to the stories by the supposed appearance of daylight, which obliged the sultan to rise, and attend to the affairs of the state. As these interruptions would have recurred many hundred times, and thus unpleasantly have broken in upon the unity and continued interest so essential to tales of this nature, they have been omitted.*] Scheherazadè immediately went on as follows.

When the merchant, sire, perceived that the Genius was about to execute his purpose, he cried aloud, "One word more, I entreat you; have the goodness to grant me a little delay; give me only time to go and take leave of my wife and children, and divide my estates among them, as I have not yet made my will, that they may not be obliged to have recourse to any legal process after my death; and when I have done this, I promise to return to this spot, and submit myself entirely to your pleasure." "But if I grant you the respite you demand," replied the Genius, "I fear you will not return." "If my oath will assure you of it," added the merchant, "I swear by the God of heaven and earth, that I will not fail to repair hither." "What length of time do you require?" said the Genius. "It will take me a full year to arrange every thing, and enable me to bear with composure the loss of life. I therefore promise you, that you shall find me to-morrow twelvemonth under these trees, waiting to deliver myself into your hands." "Take thy God to witness of the promise thou hast made me," said the other. "Again I swear," replied he, "and you may rely on my oath." On this, the Genius left him near the fountain, and immediately disappeared.

The merchant, having recovered from his fright, mounted his horse, and continued his journey.—But if, on the one hand, he rejoiced at escaping from the great peril he was in, he was, on the other, much distressed when he recollected the fatal oath he had taken. When he arrived at home, his wife and family received him with signs of the greatest joy; but instead of returning their embraces, he wept so bitterly, that they supposed something very extraordinary had happened. His wife inquired the cause of his tears, and of that grief which appeared so violent.—"We were rejoicing," she said, "at your return, and you alarm us all by the situation we see you in; explain, I entreat you, the cause of your violent sorrow." "Alas!" he replied, "how should I feel otherwise, when I have only a year to live?" He then related to them what had passed, and that he had given his word to return at the end of a year to receive his death.

When they heard this melancholy tale, they were in despair. The wife uttered the most lamentable groans, tearing her hair, and beating her breast; the children made the house round with their grief; while the father, overcome by affection, mingled his tears with theirs. In short, the whole was a most affecting scene.

The next day, the merchant began to settle his affairs, and first of all to pay his debts. He made many presents to his different friends, and large donations to the poor. He set at liberty many of his slaves of both sexes; divided his property among his children; appointed guardians for such as were young; and besides returning to his wife all the fortune she brought him, he added as much more as the law would permit.

The year soon passed away, and he was compelled to depart. He took in his wallet the garment he wished to be buried in; but when he attempted to

take leave of his wife and children, his grief quite overcame him. They could not bear his loss, and almost resolved to accompany him, and all perish together. Compelled at length to tear himself away from objects so dear, he addressed these words to them: "In leaving you, my children, I obey the command of God; imitate me, and submit with fortitude to this necessity. Remember, that to die is the inevitable destiny of man." Having said this, he snatched himself away from them, and set out. He arrived at the destined spot, on the very day he had promised. He got off his horse, and seating himself by the side of the fountain, with such sorrowful sensations as may easily be imagined, he awaited the arrival of the Genius.

While he was kept in this cruel suspense, there appeared an old man leading a hind, who came near to him. Having saluted each other, the old man said, "May I ask of you, brother, what brought you to this desert place, which is so full of evil Genii that there is no safety. From the appearance of these trees, one might suppose it was inhabited; but it is, in fact, a solitude, where it is dangerous to stay long."

The merchant satisfied the old man's curiosity, and related his adventure. He listened with astonishment to the account, and having heard it, he said, "Surely nothing in the world can be more surprising; and you have kept your oath inviolable! In truth I should like to be a witness to your interview with the Genius." Having said this, he sat down near the merchant, and while they were talking, another old man, followed by two black dogs, came in sight. As soon as he was near enough, he saluted them, and inquired the reason of their stay in that place. The first old man related the adventure of the merchant, exactly as he had told it; and added, that this was the appointed day, and that he was therefore determined to remain in order to see the event.

The second old man, thinking it also very curious, resolved to do the same; and sitting down, joined in the conversation. He had hardly done so, when a third arrived, and addressing himself to the other two, asked why the merchant, who was with them, appeared so melancholy. They related the cause, which seemed to him so wonderful, that he also resolved to be witness to what passed between the Genius and the merchant. He therefore sat down with them for this purpose.

Soon they perceived, towards the plain, a thick vapour or smoke, like a column of dust raised by the wind. This vapour approached them, and then suddenly disappearing, they saw the Genius, who, without noticing them, went towards the merchant with his scimitar in his hand; and taking him by the arm, "Get up," said he, "that I may kill thee, as thou hast slain my son." Both the merchant and the three old men were struck with terror, they began to weep and fill the air with their lamentations.

When the old man, who conducted the hind, saw the Genius lay hold of the merchant, and about to murder him without mercy he threw himself at the monster's feet, and, kissing them, said, "Prince of the Genii, I humbly entreat you to suspend your rage, and do me the favour to listen to me. I wish to relate my own history, and that of the hind, which you see; and if you find it more wonderful and surprising than the adventure of this merchant, whose life you wish to take, may I not hope that you will at least remit a third part of the punishment of this unfortunate man?" After meditating some time, the Genius answered, "Well then, I agree to it."

THE HISTORY OF THE FIRST OLD MAN AND THE HIND.

I AM now going, said he, to begin my tale, and I request your attention. The hind, whom you see here, is my cousin; nay more, she is my wife. When I married her, she was only twelve years old, and she ought, therefore, not only to look upon me as her relation and husband, but even as her father.

We lived together thirty years without having any children; this, however, was no drawback upon my kindness and regard. Still my desire of offspring was so great, that for this purpose, and for this only, I purchased a female slave, who bore me a son of great promise and expectation. Soon after my wife became infected with jealousy, and consequently took a great aversion to both mother and child; yet she so well concealed her sentiments, that I became acquainted with them, alas, too late.

In the mean time my son grew up; and he was about ten years old when I was obliged to make a journey. I recommended both the slave and the child to my wife before my departure, as I had no distrust of her; and prayed her to take great care of them during my absence, which would not be less than a year. During this time she endeavoured to satiate her hatred. She applied herself to the study of magic; and when she was sufficiently skilled in that diabolical art to execute the horrible design she meditated, the wretch carried my son to a distant place. When there, by her enchantments, she changed him into a calf, gave him to my steward, and ordered him to bring him up as a calf, which she said she had bought. She was not, however, satisfied with this infamous action, but metamorphosed the slave into a cow, which she also sent to my steward.

Immediately on my return, I inquired after my child and his mother. "Your slave is dead," said she, "and it is now more than two months since I have beheld your son; nor do I know what is become of him." I was sensibly affected at the death of the slave; but as my son had only disappeared, I flattered myself that he would soon be found. Eight months, however, passed, and he did not return; nor could I learn any tidings of him. In order to celebrate the festival of the great Bairam, which was approaching, I ordered my steward to bring me the fattest cow I possessed for a sacrifice. He obeyed my commands, and the cow he brought me was my own slave, the unfortunate mother of my son. Having bound her, I was about to make the sacrifice, when at the very instant she lowed most sorrowfully, and the tears even fell from her eyes. This seemed to me so extraordinary, that I could not but feel compassion for her, and was unable to give the fatal blow. I therefore ordered her to be taken away, and another brought.

My wife, who was present, seemed angry at my compassion, and opposed an order which defeated her malice. "What are you about, my husband?" said she, "why not sacrifice this cow? Your steward has not a more beautiful one, nor one more proper for the purpose." Wishing to oblige my wife, I again approached the cow; and struggling with my pity, which suspended the sacrifice, I was again going to give the mortal blow, when the victim a second time disarmed me by her redoubled tears and moanings. I then delivered the instruments into the hands of my steward. "Take them," I cried, "and make the sacrifice yourself; the lamentations and tears of the animal have overcome me."

The steward was less compassionate, and sacrificed her. On taking off the skin we found hardly anything but bones; though she appeared very fat. "Take her away," said I to the steward, truly chagrined, "I give her to you to do as you please with; regale both yourself and whomsoever you wish; and

if you have a very fat calf, bring it in her place." I did not inquire what he did with the cow, but he had not been gone long before I saw a remarkably fine calf brought. Although I was ignorant that this calf was my own son, yet I felt a sensation of pity arise in my breast at first sight. As soon, also, as he perceived me, he made so great an effort to come to me that he broke his cord. He lay down at my feet, with his head on the ground, as if he endeavoured to excite my compassion, and not have the cruelty to take away his life : striving in this manner to make me comprehend that he was my son.

I was still more surprised and affected by this action than I had been by the tears of the cow. I felt a kind of tender pity, which interested me much for him ; or, to speak more correctly, my blood guided me to what was my duty. "Go back," I cried, "and take all possible care of this calf, and in its room bring another directly."

No sooner did my wife hear this than she exclaimed, "What are you about, my husband ? do not, I pray, sacrifice any other than this." "Wife," answered I, "I will not sacrifice him ; I wish to favour him, do not you, therefore, oppose it." This wicked woman, however, did not agree to my proposal ; she hated my son too much to suffer him to remain in safety ; and she continued to demand his sacrifice so obstinately, that I was compelled to yield. I bound the calf, and taking the fatal knife, was going to bury it in the throat of my son, when he turned his eyes, filled with tears, so persuasively upon me, that I had no power to execute my intention. The knife fell from my hand, and I told my wife I was determined to have another calf. She tried every means to induce me to alter my mind ; I continued firm, however, in my resolution, in spite of all she could say ; promising, for the sake of appeasing her, to sacrifice this calf at the feast of Bairam on the following year.

The next morning my steward desired to speak with me in private. "I am come," said he, "to give you some information, which, I trust, will afford you pleasure. I have a daughter, who has some little knowledge of magic ; and as I was bringing the calf back yesterday, which you were unwilling to sacrifice, I observed that she smiled at seeing it, and the next moment began to weep. I inquired of her the cause of these two contrary emotions. 'My dear father,' she answered, 'that calf, which you bring back, is the son of our master ; I smiled with joy at seeing him still alive, and wept at the recollection of his mother, who was yesterday sacrificed in the shape of a cow. These two metamorphoses have been contrived by the enchantments of our master's wife, who hated both the mother and the child.' This," continued the steward, "is what my daughter said, and I come to report it to you." Imagine, O Genius, my surprise at hearing these words : I immediately set out with my steward, to speak to his daughter myself. On my arrival, I went first to the stable, where my son had been placed ; he could not return my caresses, but he received them in a way which convinced me that he was really my son.

When the daughter of the steward made her appearance, I asked her if she could restore him to his former shape. "Yes," replied she, "I can." "Ah," exclaimed I, "if you can perform such a miracle, I will make you the mistress of all I possess." She then answered with a smile, "You are our master, and I know how much we are bound to you ; but I must mention, that I can restore your son to his own form only on two conditions ; first, that you bestow him upon me for my husband, and secondly, that I may be permitted to punish her who changed him into a calf." "To the first," I replied, "I agree with all my heart ; I will still do more, I will give you, for your own separate use, a considerable sum of money, independent of what I destined for my son. In short, you shall perceive how I can acknowledge the important service you do

me. I agree also to that which regards my wife; a person who has been capable of so criminal an action is worthy of punishment. I abandon her to you, do what you please with her; I only entreat you to spare her life." "I will treat her, then," she said, "in the same manner as she has treated your son." To this I gave my consent, provided she first restored my son to me.

The damsel then took a vessel full of water, and pronouncing over it some words I did not understand, she thus addressed herself to the calf: "O calf, if thou hast been created by the all-powerful Sovereign of the world, as thou now appearest, retain that form; but if thou art a man, and hast been changed by enchantment into a calf, resume, by permission of thy divine Creator, thy natural figure!" In saying this, she threw the water over him, and he instantly regained his own form.

"My child! my dear child," I immediately exclaimed, and embraced him with a transport I could not restrain, "it is the Almighty who hath sent this damsel to us, to destroy the horrible charm with which you were surrounded, and to avenge the evil which has been done to you and your mother. I am sure your gratitude will induce you to accept her for a wife, as I have already promised for you." He joyfully consented; but before they were united the damsel changed my wife into this hind, which you see here. I wished her to have this form in preference to any other more unpleasant, that we might see her without repugnance, in our family.

Since this, my son has become a widower, and is now travelling. Many years have passed since I have heard anything of him; I have therefore now set out with a view to gain some information; and as I did not like to trust my wife to the care of any one during my search, I thought proper to carry her along with me. This is the history of myself and this hind: can anything be more wonderful? "I agree with you," said the Genius, "and in consequence, I grant a third of my pardon to this merchant."

"As soon as the first old man, sire, had finished his history," continued the sultana, "the second, who led the two black dogs, said to the Genius, 'I will relate to you what has happened to me and these two dogs which you see, and I am sure you will find my history still more astonishing than that which you have heard. But when I have told it, will you grant to this merchant another third of his pardon?' 'Yes,' answered the Genius, 'provided your history surpasses that of the hind.' This being settled, the second old man began as follows:—

THE HISTORY OF THE SECOND OLD MAN AND THE TWO BLACK DOGS.

GREAT Prince of the Genii, you must know, that these two black dogs, which you see here, and myself are three brothers. Our father left us, when he died, one thousand sequins each. With this sum we all embarked in the same profession, namely, as merchants. Soon after we had opened our warehouse, my eldest brother, who is now one of these dogs, resolved to travel, and carry on his business in foreign countries. With this view he sold all his goods, and bought such other sorts of merchandize as were adapted to the different countries he proposed visiting.

He set out, and was absent a whole year. At the end of this time, a poor man, who seemed to me to be asking charity, presented himself at my warehouse. "God help you," said I. "And you also," answered he: "is it possible you do not know me?" On looking attentively at him, I recognised

his person. "Ah, my brother," I cried, embracing him, "how should I possibly know you in this state?" I made him come in directly, and inquired both after his health and the success of his voyage. "Do not ask me," he replied; "in beholding me you see the whole. To enter into a detail of all the misfortunes that I have suffered in the last year, and which have reduced me to the state you see, would only be to renew my affliction."

I instantly shut up my shop, and neglecting everything else, I took him to the bath, and dressed him in the best apparel my wardrobe afforded. I examined the state of my business, and finding by my accounts that I had just doubled my capital, that is, that I was now worth two thousand sequins, I presented him with the half. "Let this, my brother," I said, "make you forget your losses." He joyfully accepted the thousand sequins, again settled his affairs, and we lived together as before.

Some time after this, my second brother, which is the other of these black dogs, wished also to dispose of his property. Both his elder brother and myself tried everything in our power to dissuade him from it, but in vain. He sold all, and with the money he bought such merchandise as he wished for his journey. He took his departure, and joined a caravan. At the end of a year he also returned in the same condition as his brother had done. I furnished him with clothes; and as I had gained another thousand sequins, I gave them to him. He directly bought a shop, and continued to exercise his business.

One day both my brothers came to me, and proposed that I should make a voyage with them, for the purpose of traffic. "You have travelled," said I, at once rejecting the scheme, "and what have you gained? Who will insure that I shall be more fortunate than you?" In vain did they use every argument they thought could induce me to try my fortune. I still refused to consent to their design. They returned, however, so often to the subject, that, after having withstood their solicitations for five years, I at length yielded.

When it became necessary to prepare for the voyage, and we were consulting on the sort of merchandise to be bought, I discovered that they had consumed their capital, and that nothing remained of the thousand sequins I had given to each. I did not, however, reproach them; on the contrary, as my capital was increased to six thousand sequins, I divided the half with them, and said, "We must, my brothers, risk offly three thousand sequins, and endeavour to conceal the other in some secure place, that if our voyage be not more successful than those you have already made, we shall, with this sum, be able to console ourselves and begin our former profession. I will give one thousand sequins to each, and keep one myself; and I will conceal the other three thousand in a corner of my house." We purchased our goods, embarked in a vessel, which we ourselves freighted, and set sail with a favourable wind. After sailing about a month, we arrived, without any accident, at a port, where we landed, and had a most advantageous sale for our merchandise. I, in particular, sold mine so well, that I gained ten for one. We then purchased the produce of that country, in order to traffic with it in our own.

About the time that we were ready to embark on our return I accidentally met on the sea-shore a female, of a very fine figure, but poorly dressed. She accosted me by kissing my hand, and entreated me most earnestly to permit her to go with me, and take her for my wife. I started many difficulties to such a plan; but at length she said so much to persuade me that I ought not to regard her poverty, and that I should be well satisfied with her conduct, I was quite overcome. I directly procured proper dresses for her, and after marrying her in due form, she embarked with me, and we set sail.

During our voyage, I found my wife possessed of so many good qualities,

that I loved her every day more and more. In the mean time my two brothers, who had not traded so advantageously as myself, and who were jealous of my prosperity, began to feel exceedingly envious. They even went so far as to conspire against my life; for one night, while my wife and I were asleep, they threw us into the sea.

My wife proved to be a fairy, consequently possessed of supernatural power; you may therefore imagine she was not hurt. As for myself, I should certainly have perished without her aid. I had hardly, however, fallen into the water before she took me up, and transported me into an island. As soon as it was day, the fairy thus addressed me:—"You may observe, my husband, that in saving your life, I have not ill rewarded the good you have done me. You must know, that I am a fairy, and being upon the shore when you were about to sail, I felt a great inclination for you. I wished to try the goodness of your heart, and for this purpose I presented myself before you in the disguise you saw. You acted most generously, and I am therefore delighted in finding an occasion of showing my gratitude: but I am enraged against your brothers, nor shall I be satisfied till I have taken their lives."

I listened with astonishment to the discourse of the fairy, and thanked her, as well as I was able, for the great obligation she had conferred on me. "But, madam," said I to her, "I must entreat you to pardon my brothers; for although I have the greatest reason to complain of their conduct, yet I am not so cruel as to wish their destruction." I related to her what I had done for each of them, but my account only increased her anger. "I must instantly fly after these ungrateful wretches," cried she, "and bring them to a just punishment; I will sink their vessel, and precipitate them to the bottom of the sea." "No, beautiful lady," replied I; "for Heaven's sake, moderate your indignation, and do not execute so dreadful an intention; remember they are still my brothers, and that we are bound to return good for evil."

I appeased the fairy by these words; and no sooner had I pronounced them, than she transported me in an instant from the island, wheré we were, to the top of my own house, which was terraced, and then disappeared. I descended, opened the doors, and dug up the three thousand sequins which I had hidden. I afterwards repaired to my shop, opened it, and received the congratulations of the merchants in the neighbourhood on my arrival. When I returned home, I perceived these two black dogs, which came towards me with a submissive air. I could not imagine what this meant, but the fairy, who soon appeared, satisfied my curiosity. "My dear husband," said she, "be not surprised at seeing these two dogs in your house; they are your brothers." My blood ran cold on hearing this, and I inquired by what power they had been transformed into that state. "It is I," replied the fairy, "who have done it; at least it is one of my sisters, to whom I gave the commission, and she has also sunk their ship; you will lose the merchandise it contained, but I shall recompense you in some other way; as to your brothers, I have condemned them to remain under this form for ten years, as a punishment for their perfidy." Then informing me where I might hear of her, she disappeared.

The ten years are now completed, and I am travelling in search of her. As I was passing this way, I met this merchant and the good old man who is leading his hind, and here I staid. "This, O Prince of the Genii, is my history; does it not appear to you of a most extraordinary nature?" "Yes," replied the Genius, "I confess it is most wonderful, and therefore I remit the second third of the merchant's punishment."

When the second old man had finished his story, the third began by asking the Genius, as the others had done, if he would forgive the other third of the merchant's crime, provided his history surpassed the other two in the singu-

larity and uncommonness of its events: the Genius repeated his former promise.

The third old man, sire, related his history to the Genius, but as it has not yet come to my knowledge, I cannot repeat it, but I know it was so much beyond the others, from the variety of wonderful adventures it contained, that the Genius was astonished. He had no sooner heard the conclusion, than he said, "I grant you the remaining third part of the merchant's pardon; and he ought to be infinitely obliged to you all for having freed him from his dangerous situation by the relation of your adventures; for without your aid he would not now have been in this world." Having said this, he disappeared, to the great joy of the whole party.

The merchant did not omit to bestow many thanks upon his liberators. They rejoiced with him at being out of danger, and then bidding him adieu, each went his own way. The merchant returned home to his wife and children, and spent the remainder of his days with them in tranquillity. "But, sire," added Scheherazadè, "however beautiful those tales which I have related to your majesty may be, they are not equal to that of the fisherman." Dinarzadè, observing that the sultan made no answer, said, "Since there is still some time, my sister, pray recount his history; the sultan, I hope, will not object to it." Schahriar consented to it, and Scheherazadè went on as follows.

THE HISTORY OF THE FISHERMAN.

THERE was formerly, sire, an aged fisherman, who was so poor that he could barely obtain food for himself, his wife, and three children, of which his family consisted. He went out early every morning to his employment; and he had imposed a rule upon himself never to cast his nets above four times a day.

One morning he set out before the moon had disappeared: when he had got to the sea-shore, he undressed himself, and threw his nets. In drawing them to land, he perceived a considerable resistance, and began to imagine he should have an excellent haul, at which he was much pleased. But the moment after, finding that, instead of fish, he had got nothing but the carcase of an ass in his nets, he was much vexed and afflicted at having had so bad a draught. When he had mended his nets, which the weight of the ass had torn in many places, he threw them a second time. He again found considerable resistance in drawing them up, and again he thought they were filled with fish; how great then was his disappointment in discovering only a large pannier or basket, filled with sand and mud. "O fortune!" he exclaimed, in the greatest affliction, and with a melancholy voice, "cease to be enraged against me. Persecute not an unfortunate being who thus supplicates thee to spare him. I came from home to seek after life, and you announce my death. I have no other trade by which I can subsist, and even with all my care, I can hardly supply the most pressing wants of my family. But wherefore should I complain of thee, who takest a pleasure in abusing the virtuous, and leaving great men in obscurity, while thou favourest the wicked, and exaltest those who possess no virtue to recommend them?"

Having thus vented his complaints, he angrily threw aside the pannier, and washing his nets from the mud, he threw them a third time. He brought up only stones, shells, and filth. It is impossible to describe his despair, which almost deprived him of his senses. The day now began to break, and, like a good Mussulman, he did not neglect his prayers, to which he added the following:—"Thou knowest, O Lord, that I throw my nets only four times a day; three times have I cast them into the sea without any profit

for my labour. Once more alone remains ; and I entreat thee to render the sea favourable, as thou formerly didst to Moses."

When the fisherman had finished this prayer, he threw his nets for the fourth time. Again he supposed he had caught a great quantity of fish, as he drew them with as much difficulty as before. He nevertheless found none ; but discovered a vase of yellow copper, which seemed, from its weight, to be filled with something ; and he observed that it was shut up and fastened with lead, on which there was the impression of a seal. "I will sell this to a founder," said he, with joy, "and with the money I shall get for it I will purchase a measure of corn."

He examined the vase on all sides ; he shook it, in order to discover whether its contents would rattle. He could hear nothing ; and this, together with the impression of the seal on the lead, made him think it was filled with something valuable. In order to find this out, he took his knife, and got it open without much difficulty. He directly turned the top downwards, and was much surprised to find nothing come out ; he then set it down before him, and while he was attentively observing it, there issued from it so thick a smoke that he was obliged to step back a few paces. This smoke, by degrees, rose almost to the clouds, and spread itself over both the water and the shore, appearing like a thick fog. The fisherman, as may easily be imagined, was a good deal surprised at this sight. When the smoke had all come out from the vase, it again collected itself, and became a solid body, and then took the shape of a Genius, twice as large as any of the giants. At the appearance of so enormous a monster, the fisherman wished to run away, but his fears were so great, he was unable to move.

"Solomon, Solomon," cried the Genius, "great prophet of God ! pardon, I pray. I never more will oppose thy will, but will obey all thy commands."

The fisherman, sire, had no sooner heard these words spoken by the Genius than he regained his courage, and said, "Proud spirit, what is this thou sayest ; Solomon, the prophet of the Most High, has been dead more than eighteen hundred years.—Inform me, I pray, of thine history, and on what account thou wast shut up in this vase."

To this speech, the Genius, looking disdainfully at the fisherman, answered, "Speak more civilly ; thou art very bold to call me a proud spirit." "Perhaps, then," returned the fisherman, "it will be more civil to call you an owl of good luck." "I tell thee," said the Genius, "speak to me more civilly, before I kill thee." "And for what reason, pray, will you kill me?" answered the fisherman ; "have you already forgotten that I have set you at liberty ?" "I remember it very well," returned he ; "but that shall not prevent my destroying thee, and I will only grant thee one favour." "And pray what is that?" said the fisherman. "It is," replied the Genius, "to permit thee to choose the manner of thy death." "But in what," added the other, "have I offended you ? Is it thus thou wouldst recompense me for the good I have done thee?" "I can treat thee no otherwise," said the Genius ; "and to convince thee of it, attend to my history.

"I am one of those spirits who rebelled against the sovereignty of God. All the other Genii acknowledged the great Solomon, the prophet of God, and submitted to him. Sacer and myself were the only ones who were above humbling ourselves. In order to revenge himself, this powerful monarch charged Assaf, the son of Barakhia, his first minister, to come and seize me. This was done ; and Assaf took and brought me, in spite of myself, before the throne of the king, his master.

"Solomon, the son of David, commanded me to quit my mode of life, acknowledge his authority, and submit to his laws. I haughtily refused to

obey him, and rather exposed myself to his resentment than take the oath of fidelity and submission which he required of me. In order, therefore, to punish me, he enclosed me in this copper vase; and, to prevent my forcing my way out, he put upon the leaden cover the impression of his seal, on which the great name of God is engraven. This done, he gave the vase to one of those Genii who obeyed him, and ordered him to cast me into the sea; which, to my great sorrow, was performed directly.

"During the first period of my captivity, I swore that if any one delivered me before the first hundred years were passed, I would make him rich, even after his death. The time elapsed, and no one assisted me: during the second century, I swore that if any released me, I would discover to him all the treasures of the earth; still I was not more fortunate. During the third, I promised to make my deliverer a most powerful monarch, to be always hovering near him, and to grant him every day any three requests he chose. This age too, like the former, passed away, and I remained in the same situation. Enraged, at last, to be so long a prisoner, I swore that I would, without mercy, kill whoever should in future release me, and that the only favour I would grant him should be, to choose what manner of death he pleased. Since, therefore, thou hast come here to-day, and hast delivered me, fix upon whatever kind of death thou wilt."

The fisherman was much afflicted at this speech. "How unfortunate," he exclaimed, "am I, to come here and render so great a service to such an ungrateful object! Consider, I entreat you, your injustice, and revoke so unreasonable an oath. Pardon me, and God will, in like manner, pardon you. If you generously suffer me to live, he will defend you from all attempts that may be made against your life." "No," answered the Genius, "thy death is certain; determine only how I shall kill thee." The fisherman was in great distress at finding him thus resolved on his death, not so much on his own account as that of his three children, whose wretched state he greatly deplored when they would be reduced by his death. He still endeavoured to appease the Genius. "Alas!" he cried, "have pity on me, in consideration of what I have done for thee." "I have already told thee," replied the Genius, "that it is for that very reason that I am obliged to take thy life." "It is very strange," added the fisherman, "that you are determined to return evil for good. The proverb says that he who does good to him that does not deserve it is always ill rewarded. I did think, I own, that it was false, because nothing is more contrary to reason and the rights of society; yet I cruelly find it too true." "Let us lose no time," cried the Genius; "your arguments will not alter my resolution. Make haste and tell me how you wish to die."

Necessity is the spur to invention; and the fisherman thought of a stratagem. "Since, then," said he, "I cannot escape death, I submit to the will of God; but before I choose the sort of death, I conjure you, by the great name of God, which is graven upon the seal of the prophet Solomon, the son of David, answer me truly to a question I am going to put to you." The Genius trembled at this adjuration, and felt that he should be compelled to answer positively. He then said to the fisherman, "Ask what thou wilt, and make haste."

The Genius had no sooner promised to speak the truth than the fisherman said to him, "I wish to know whether you really were in that vase; dare you swear it by the great name of God?" "Yes," answered the Genius, "I swear by the great name of God that I most certainly was." "In truth," replied the fisherman, "I cannot believe you. This vase cannot contain one of your feet; how then can it hold your whole body?" "I swear to thee, notwithstanding," replied he, "that I was there just as thou seest me. Wilt

thou not believe me after the solemn oath I have taken?" "No, truly," added the fisherman, "I shall not believe you unless I were to see it."

Immediately, the form of the Genius began to change into smoke, and extended itself, as before, over both the shore and the sea; and then, collecting itself, began to enter the vase, and continued to do so, in a slow and equal manner, till nothing remained without. A voice immediately issued forth, saying "Now then, thou incredulous fisherman, dost thou believe me now I am in the vase?" But, instead of answering the Genius, he immediately took the leaden cover, and put it on the vase. "Genius," he cried, "it is now your turn to ask pardon, and choose what sort of death is most agreeable to you. But no; it is better that I should throw you again into the sea, and I will build, on the very spot where you are cast, a house upon the shore, in which I will live, to warn all fishermen that shall come and throw their nets, not to fish up so wicked a Genius as thou art, who makest an oath to kill the man who shall set thee at liberty."

At this offensive speech, the enraged Genius tried every method to get out of the vase, but in vain; for the impression of the seal of Solomon, the prophet, the son of David, prevented him. Knowing then that the fisherman had the advantage over him, he began to conceal his rage. "Take care," said he, in a softened tone, "what you are about, fisherman. Whatever I did was merely in joke, and you ought not to take it seriously." "O Genius," answered the fisherman, "you who were a moment ago the greatest of all the Genii, are now the most insignificant; and do not suppose that your flattering speeches will be of any use to you. You shall assuredly return to the sea; and if you passed all the time there which you have stated, you may as well remain till the day of judgment. I entreated you, in the name of God, not to take my life, and you rejected my prayers; I now reject yours, likewise."

The Genius tried every argument to move the fisherman's pity, but in vain. "I conjure you to open the vase," said he; "if you give me my liberty again, you shall have reason to be satisfied with my gratitude." "You are too treacherous for me to trust you," returned the fisherman; "I should deserve to lose my life if I had the imprudence to put it in your power a second time. You would most likely treat me as a Greek king treated Douban the physician. Listen, and I will tell you the story."

THE HISTORY OF THE GREEK KING, AND DOUBAN THE PHYSICIAN.

IN the country of Zouman, in Persia, there lived a king, whose subjects were originally Greeks. This king was sorely afflicted with a leprosy, and his physicians had unsuccessfully tried every remedy they were acquainted with, when a very ingenious physician, called Douban, arrived at the court.

He had acquired his profound learning by studying different authors in the Greek, Latin, Persian, Arabic, Turkish, Syriac, and Hebrew languages; and besides having a consummate knowledge of philosophy, he was well acquainted with the good and bad properties of all kinds of plants and drugs.

As soon as he was informed of the king's illness, and that the physicians had given him up, he dressed himself as neatly as possible, and obtained permission to be presented to the king. "Sire," said he, "I know that all the physicians who have attended your majesty, have been unable to remove your leprosy; but if you will do me the honour to accept of my services, I will engage to cure you without either internal doses, or outward applications." The king, pleased with this proposition, replied, "If you are really so skilful as you pretend, I

promise to confer affluence on you and your posterity ; and without reckoning the presents you will have, you shall be my first favourite ; but do you assure me, then, that you will remove my leprosy without making me swallow any potion, or applying any remedy externally ?" "Yes, sire," replied the physician, "I flatter myself I shall succeed, with the help of God ; and to-morrow I will begin my operations."

Douban returned to his house, and made a sort of racket or bat, with a hollow in the handle, to admit the drug he meant to use ; that being done, he also prepared a sort of round ball, or bowl, in the manner he intended, and the following day he presented himself before the king, and, prostrating himself at his feet, kissed the ground.

Douban then arose, and having made a profound reverence, told the king that he must ride on horseback to the place where he was accustomed to play at bowls. The king did as he was desired ; and when he had reached the bowling-green, the physician approached him, and putting into his hand the bat which he had prepared, "Sire," said he, "exercise yourself with striking that bowl about with this bat till you find yourself in a profuse perspiration. When the remedy I have enclosed in its handle is warmed by your hand, it will penetrate through your whole body ; you may then leave off, for the drug will have taken effect ; and when you return to your palace, get into a warm bath, and be well rubbed and washed ; then go to bed, and to-morrow you will be quite cured.

The king took the bat, and spurred his horse after the bowl till he struck it ; it was sent back again to him by the officers, who were playing with him, and he struck it again ; and thus the game continued for a considerable time, till he found his hand as well as his whole body in a perspiration, which made the remedy in the bat operate as the physician had said ; the king then left the game, returned to the palace, bathed, and observed very punctually all the directions that had been given him.

He soon found the good effects of the prescription ; for when he arose the next morning, he perceived with equal surprise and joy that his leprosy was entirely cured, and that his body was as clear as if he had never been attacked by that malady. As soon as he was dressed he went into the audience-room, where he mounted his throne and received the congratulations of all his courtiers, who had assembled on that day partly to gratify their curiosity and partly to testify their joy.

Douban entered, and went to prostrate himself at the foot of the throne, with his face towards the ground. The king, seeing him, called to him, and made him sit by his side ; and showing him to the assembly, gave him in that public way all the praise he so well deserved ; nay, he did not stop here, for there being a grand entertainment at court on that day, he placed him at his own table to dine only with him.

The Greek king (proceeded the fisherman) was not satisfied with admitting the physician to his own table ; towards evening, when the courtiers were about to depart, he put on him a long rich robe resembling that which the courtiers usually wore in his presence, and in addition, made him a present of two thousand sequins. The following days he did nothing but caress him ; in short, this prince, thinking he could never repay the obligations he owed to so skilful a physician, was continually conferring on him some fresh proof of his gratitude.

The king had a grand vizier, who was avaricious, envious, and by nature capable of every species of crime. He observed, not without pain, the presents which had been bestowed upon the physician, whose great character and merit he was determined to lessen and destroy in the mind of the king. To accom-

plish this, he went to him, and said in private that he had some intelligence of the greatest moment to communicate. The king asked him what it was. "Sire," replied he, "it is very dangerous for a monarch to place any confidence in a man of whose fidelity he is not assured. In overwhelming the physician Douban with your favours, and bestowing all this kindness and regard upon him, you know not but he may be a traitor, who has introduced himself to the court in order to assassinate you." "What is this you dare tell me?" answered the king. "Recollect to whom you speak, and that you advance an assertion to which I shall not easily give credit." "Sire," added the vizier, "I am accurately informed of what I have the honour to represent to you; do not therefore continue to repose such a dangerous confidence in him. If your majesty is, as it were, in a dream, it is time to awake; for I again repeat, that the physician Douban has not travelled from the farther part of Greece, his own country, but for the horrible design I have mentioned."

"No, no, vizier," interrupted the king; "I am sure this man, whom you consider as a hypocrite and traitor, is one of the most virtuous and best of men; there is no one in the world whom I regard so much. You know by what remedy, or rather by what miracle, he cured me of my leprosy; and if he had sought my life, why did he thus save it. Cease then from endeavouring to instil unjust suspicions, for instead of listening to them, I now inform you, that from this very day I bestow upon him a pension of one thousand sequins a month for the rest of his life. And were I to share all my riches, and even my kingdoms with him, I could never sufficiently repay what he has done for me. I see what it is, his virtue excites your envy; but do not suppose that I shall suffer myself to be prejudiced against him unjustly. I well remember what a vizier said to King Sinbad, his master, to prevent his giving orders for the death of his son."

This very much excited the curiosity of the vizier. "I beg your majesty will pardon me if I have the boldness to ask you what it was that the vizier of King Sinbad said to his master, in order to avert the death of his son." The Greek king had the complaisance to satisfy him. "This vizier," added he, "after having represented to King Sinbad that he ought to hesitate to do a thing which was founded on the suggestion of a mother-in-law, for fear she should repent, related the following story."

THE HISTORY OF THE HUSBAND AND THE PARROT.

THERE lived once a good man who had a beautiful wife, of whom he was so passionately fond, that he could scarcely bear to have her out of his sight. One day, when some particular business obliged him to leave her, he went to a place where they sold all sorts of birds; he purchased a parrot, which was not only highly accomplished in the art of talking, but also possessed the rare gift of telling everything that was done in its presence. The husband took it home in a cage to his wife, and begged of her to keep it in her chamber, and take great care of it during his absence; after this he set out on his journey.

On his return, he did not fail to interrogate the parrot on what had passed while he was away; and the bird very expertly related a few circumstances which occasioned the husband to reprimand his wife. She supposed that some of her slaves had exposed her, but they all assured her they were faithful, and agreed in charging the parrot with the crime. Desirous of being convinced of the truth of this matter, the wife devised a method of quieting the suspicions of her husband, and at the same time of revenging herself on the parrot, if he

were the culprit. The next time the husband was absent, she ordered one of her slaves, during the night, to turn a handmill under the bird's cage, and another to throw water over it like rain, and a third to wave a looking-glass before the parrot by the light of a candle. The slaves were employed the greatest part of the night in doing what their mistress had ordered them, and succeeded to her satisfaction.

The following day, when the husband returned, he again applied to the parrot to be informed of what had taken place. The bird replied, "My dear master, the lightning, the thunder, and the rain, have so disturbed me the whole night, that I cannot tell you how much I have suffered." The husband, who knew there had been no storm that night, became convinced that the parrot did not always relate facts; and that having told an untruth in this particular, he had also deceived him with respect to his wife: being therefore extremely enraged with it, he took the bird out of the cage, and, dashing it on the floor, killed it. He, however, afterwards learnt from his neighbours, that the poor parrot had told no falsehood in reference to his wife's conduct, which made him repent of having destroyed it.

"When the Greek king," said the fisherman to the Genius, "had finished the story of the parrot," he added, "You, vizier, through envy of Douban, who has done you no evil, wish me to order his death, but I will take good care lest, like the husband who killed his parrot, I should afterwards repent."

The vizier was too desirous of the death of Douban to let it rest here. "Sire," replied he, "the loss of the parrot was of little importance, nor do I think his master could long have regretted it. But on what account should the dread of oppressing the innocent prevent you from destroying this physician?" Is it not a sufficient reason, that he is accused of attempting your life, to authorize you to take away his? When the life of a king is in question, a bare suspicion ought to be equal to a certainty; and it is better to sacrifice the innocent than save the guilty. But this, sire, by no means rests on an uncertainty. The physician Douban positively wishes to assassinate you. It is not envy that makes me hostile to him, it is the interest alone that I take in your majesty's preservation; it is my zeal which induces me to give my advice on so important an occasion. If my information is false, I deserve the same punishment that a certain vizier underwent formerly." "What had that vizier done worthy of chastisement?" said the Greek king. "I will tell your majesty," answered the vizier, "if you will have the goodness to listen."

THE HISTORY OF THE VIZIER WHO WAS PUNISHED.

THERE was formerly a king, whose son was passionately fond of hunting. His father, therefore, often indulged him in this diversion; but at the same time gave positive orders to his grand vizier always to accompany, and never lose sight of him.

One hunting morning, the prickers roused a stag, and the prince set off in pursuit, thinking that the vizier was following him. He galloped so long and his eagerness carried him so far, that he at last found himself quite alone. He immediately stopped, and observing that he had lost his way, he endeavoured to return back by the same, in order to join the vizier, who had not been sufficiently attentive in following him. He was, however, unable to find it; and riding about on all sides, without getting into the right track, he by chance met a lady, not ill made, who was weeping most bitterly. The prince immediately checked his horse, and inquired of her who she was, what she did alone

in that place, and whether he could assist her. "I am," she answered, "the daughter of an Indian king. In riding out into the country, I was overcome with sleep, and fell from my horse. He has run away, and I know not what has become of him." The young prince was sorry for her misfortune, and proposed to take her up behind him, which she accepted.

As they passed by an old ruined building, the lady made some excuse to alight; the prince therefore stopped, and suffered her to get down. He also alighted, and walked towards the building, holding his horse by the bridle. Imagine then what was his astonishment, when he heard the female pronounce these words from within the walls: "*Rejoice, my children, I have brought you a very nice fat youth.*" And directly afterwards other voices answered, "*Where is he, mamma? Let us eat him instantly, for we are very hungry.*"

The prince had heard enough to convince him of the danger he was in: he plainly perceived that she, who represented herself as the daughter of an Indian king, was no other than the wife of one of those savage demons called Ogres, who live in desert places, and make use of a thousand wiles to surprise and devour the unfortunate passengers. He trembled with fear, and instantly mounted his horse.

The pretended princess at that moment made her appearance, and finding she had failed in her scheme, "Do not be afraid," she cried, "but tell me who you are, and what you are looking for." "I have lost my way," he replied, "and am endeavouring to find it." "If you are lost," she said, "recommend yourself to God, and he will deliver you from your difficulty."

The young prince could not believe that she spoke sincerely, but that she considered him as already within her power; he lifted up his hands therefore towards heaven, and said, "Cast thine eyes upon me, O all-powerful Lord, and deliver me from this my enemy!" At this prayer, the Ogre went back to the ruin, and the prince rode off as fast as possible. He fortunately discovered the right road, and arrived safely at home, and related to his father, word for word, the great danger he had encountered through the neglect of the grand vizier. The king was so enraged at him, that he ordered this minister to be instantly strangled.

"Sire," continued the vizier of the Greek king, "to return to the physician Douban; if you do not take care, the confidence you place in him will turn out unfortunate. I well know that he is a spy, sent by your enemies to attempt your majesty's life. He has cured you, you say; but who can tell that? He has perhaps only cured you in appearance, and not radically; and who can tell whether this remedy in the end will not produce the most pernicious effects?"

The Greek king was naturally rather weak, and had not penetration enough to discover the wicked intention of his vizier, nor sufficient firmness to persist in his first opinion. This conversation staggered him. "You are right, vizier," said he, "he may be come for the express purpose of taking my life, which he can easily accomplish, even by the mere smell of some of his drugs. We must consider what is to be done in this conjuncture!"

When the vizier perceived the king in the disposition he wished, he said to him, "The best and most certain means, sire, to insure your repose, and put your person in safety, is instantly to send to Douban, and on his appearance, order him to be beheaded." "Indeed," replied the king, "I think I ought to prevent his designs." Having said this, he called one of his officers, and ordered him to find the physician, who, without knowing what the king wished, hastened to the palace.

"Knowest thou," said the king as soon as he saw him, "why I sent for thee here?" "No, sire," answered Douban, "and I wait till your majesty

pleases to instruct me." "I have ordered thee to come," replied the king, "to free myself from thy snares, by taking thy life."

It is impossible to express the astonishment of Douban at hearing the sentence of his death. "For what reason, sire," replied he, "does your majesty condemn me to death? What crime have I been guilty of?" "I have been well informed," added the king, "that you are a spy, and that you have come to my court in order to take away my life; but to prevent that, I will first deprive you of yours. Strike," added he to an officer who was by, "and deliver me from a treacherous wretch, who has introduced himself here only to assassinate me."

At hearing this, the physician at once surmised that the honours and riches which had been heaped upon him had excited some enemies against him, and that the king, through weakness, had suffered himself to be guided by them; nor was he wrong. He began to repent having cured him; but that feeling came too late. "Is it thus," he cried, "that you recompense the good I have done you?" The king, however, paid no attention, and desired the officer, a second time, to execute his orders. The physician had then recourse to prayers. "Ah, sire," he cried, "if you prolong my life, God will prolong yours; do not kill me, lest God should treat you after the same manner."

"You see, then," said the fisherman, breaking off his story in this place, and addressing himself to the Genius, "that what has passed between the Greek king and the physician Douban is exactly the same as what has happened between us."

The Greek king, however, continued he, instead of regarding the entreaties the physician urged in conjuring him, in the name of God, to relent, exclaimed, "No, no, you must die, or you will take away my life in a still more concealed manner than you have cured me." Douban in the mean time bathed in tears, complained much at finding his important services so ill requited, and at last prepared for death. The officer then put a bandage over his eyes, tied his hands, and was going to draw his scimitar. The courtiers, however, who were present, felt so much for him, that they entreated the king to pardon him, assuring his majesty he was not guilty, and that they would answer for his innocence. But the king was inflexible, and spoke so peremptorily, that they dared not reply.

The physician being on his knees, his eyes bandaged, and ready to receive the stroke that was to terminate his existence, once more addressed the king: "Since your majesty, sire, will not revoke the order for my death, I entreat you at least to give me leave to return home to arrange my funeral, take a last farewell of my family, bestow some charity, and leave my books to those who will know how to make a good use of them. There is one of them which I wish to make a present to your majesty. It is a very rare and curious work, and worthy of being kept even in your treasury with the greatest care." "What book can these be," replied the king, "so valuable as you mention?" "Sire," answered the physician, "it contains things of the most curious nature, and one of the principal is, that when my head shall be struck off, if your majesty will take the trouble to open the book at the sixth leaf, and read the third line on the left-hand page, my head will answer every question you wish to ask." The king was so desirous of seeing such a wonderful thing, that he put off his death till the next day, and sent him home under a strong guard.

The physician then arranged all his affairs, and as the news got abroad that an unheard-of prodigy was to happen after his execution, the viziers, emirs, officers of the guard, in short all the court, flocked the next day to the hall of audience to witness such an extraordinary event.

Douban the physician appeared directly after, and advanced to the foot of the throne with a very large volume in his hand. He then placed it on a vase, and unfolded the cover in which the book was wrapped : and in presenting it, he thus addressed the king : "If it be your pleasure, sire, receive this book ; and as soon as my head shall be struck off, order one of your officers to place it on the vase upon the cover of the book ; as soon as it is there, the blood will cease to flow : then open the book, and my head shall answer all your questions. But, sire," added Douban, "pernit me once more to implore your mercy. Consider, I beg of you, in the name of God, that I protest to you I am innocent." "Thy prayers," answered the king, "are aseless, and were it only to hear thy head speak after thy death, I should wish for thy execution. In saying this, he took the book from the hands of the physician, and ordered the officer to do his duty.

The head was so adroitly cut off, that it fell into the vase, and it had hardly been on the cover an instant before the blood stopped. Then, to the astonishment of the king, and all the spectators, it opened its eyes, and said, "Will your majesty now open the book." The king did so, and finding that the first leaf stuck to the second, he put his finger to his mouth, and moistened it, in order to turn it over more easily. He went on doing so till he came to the sixth leaf ; and observing nothing written upon the appointed page, "Physician," said he to the head, "there is no writing." "Turn over, then, a few more leaves," replied the head. The king continued turning them over, still putting his finger frequently to his mouth, till the poison, in which each leaf had been dipped, began to produce its effect. The prince then felt himself suddenly agitated in a most extraordinary manner ; his sight failed him, and he fell at the foot of the throne in the greatest convulsions.

When the physician Douban, or rather his head, saw that the poison had taken effect, and that the king had only a few minutes to live, "Tyrant," he exclaimed, "behold how those princes are treated who abuse their power and sacrifice the innocent. God sooner or later punishes their injustice and their cruelty." The head had no sooner repeated these words than the king expired ; and, at the same time, the small portion of life that remained in the head itself was wasted.

"Such, sire," continued Scheherazadè, "was the end of the Greek king and the physician Douban. I shall now return to the fisherman and the Genius."

As soon as the fisherman had finished the history of the Greek king and the physician Douban, he applied it to the Genius, whom he still kept confined in the vase. "If," said he, "the Greek king had permitted Douban to live, God would also have bestowed the same benefit on him : but he rejected the humble prayers of the physician ; God therefore punished him. This, O Genius, is the case with yourself. If I had been able to make you relent, and could have obtained the favour I asked of you, I should have pitied the state in which you now are ; but since you persisted in your determination to kill me, in spite of the obligation you were under to me for setting you at liberty, I ought, in my turn, to show no mercy. In leaving you within this vase, and casting you into the sea, I shall deprive you of the use of your existence, till the end of time. This is the revenge you yourself have taught me."

"Once more, my good friend," replied the Genius, "I entreat you not to be guilty of so cruel an act ; remember that revenge is not a part of virtue ; on the contrary, it is praiseworthy to return good for evil. Do not, then, serve me as Imma formerly treated Ateca." "And how was that ?" asked the fisherman. "If you wish to be informed of it, open this vase," answered the Genius ; "do you think that I am in the humour, while confined in this narrow prison, to

relate stories? I will tell you as many as you please when you shall have let me out." "No, no," said the fisherman, "I will not release you; it is better for me to cast you to the bottom of the sea." "One word more, fisherman," cried the Genius: "I will teach you how to become as rich as possible."

The hope of being no longer in want, at once disarmed the fisherman. "I would listen to you," he cried, "if I had the least ground to believe you; swear to me by the great name of God that you will faithfully observe what you say, and I will open the vase. I do not believe that you will be sufficiently bold to violate such an oath." The Genius did so; and the fisherman immediately took off the covering. The smoke instantly issued from it, and the first thing the Genius did, after he had resumed his usual form, was to kick the vase into the sea, an action which rather alarmed the fisherman. "What do you mean, O Genius, by this; do you not intend to keep the oath you have taken? Or must I address the same words to you which the physician Douban did to the Greek king—'Suffer me to live, and God will prolong your days?'"

The fear expressed by him made the Genius laugh; "Be of good heart, fisherman," answered he, "I have thrown the vase into the sea only for diversion, and to see whether you would be alarmed: but to show you that I intend to keep my word, take your nets and follow me." They passed by the city and went over the top of a mountain, from whence they descended into a vast plain, which led them to a pond, situated between four small hills.

When they were arrived on the borders of the pond, the Genius said to the fisherman, "Throw your nets, and catch fish." The fisherman did not doubt that he should take some, for he saw a great quantity in the pond; but how great was his surprise at finding them of four different colours—white, red, blue, and yellow. He threw his nets and caught four, one of each colour. As he had never seen any similar to them, he could hardly cease admiring them; and judging that he could dispose of them for a considerable sum, he expressed great joy. "Carry these fish to the palace," said the Genius, "and present them to the sultan, and he will give you more money than you ever handled in all your life. You may come every day and fish in this pond, but beware of casting your nets more than once each day: if you act otherwise, some evil will befall you; therefore take care. This is my advice, and if you follow it exactly you will do well." Having said this, he struck his foot against the ground, which opened, and having sunk into it, the earth closed as before.

The fisherman resolved to observe the advice and instructions of the Genius in every point, and take care never to throw his nets a second time. He went back to the town very well satisfied with his success, and making a thousand reflections on his adventure. He went directly and presented his fish at the sultan's palace.

I leave it to your majesty to imagine how much the sultan was surprised when he saw the four fish brought him by the fisherman. He took them one by one, and observed them most attentively; and after admiring them a long time, he said to his first vizier, "Take these fish and carry them to that excellent cook which the emperor of the Greeks sent me; I think they must be equally good as they are beautiful."

The vizier took them, and delivered them himself into the hands of the cook. "Here are four fish," said he, "which have been presented to the sultan; he commands you to dress them." He then returned to the sultan his master, who desired him to give the fisherman four hundred pieces of gold; which he faithfully executed. The fisherman, who was never before in possession of so large a sum of money at once, could not conceal his joy, and thought it all a dream. He soon, however, proved it to be a reality by the good purpose to which he applied the gold, in relieving the wants of his family.

We must now, sire (continued Scheherazadè), give some account of what passed in the sultan's kitchen, which we shall find in great confusion and difficulty. As soon as the cook had cleaned the fish which the vizier had brought, she put them in a vessel, with some oil, over the fire to fry. When she thought they were sufficiently done on one side, she turned them. She had hardly done so when, wonderful to relate, the wall of the kitchen appeared to separate, and a beautiful and majestic young damsel came out of the opening. She was dressed in a satin robe, embroidered with flowers after the Egyptian manner, and adorned with ear-rings and a necklace of large pearls, and gold bracelets set with rubies; she held a rod of myrtle in her hand. Approaching the vessel, to the great astonishment of the cook, who remained motionless at the sight, and striking one of the fish with her rod, she said, "Fish, fish, art thou doing thy duty?" The fish answering not a word, she again repeated it, when the four fish all raised themselves up, and said very distinctly, "Yes, yes, if you reckon, we reckon; if you pay your debts, we pay ours; if you fly, we conquer, and are content." As soon as they had spoken these words, the damsel overturned the vessel, and went back through the wall, which immediately closed up, and was in the same state as before.

The cook, whom all these wonders alarmed, having in some measure recovered from her fright, went to take up the fish, which had fallen upon the hot ashes; but she found them blacker and more burnt than the coals themselves, and not at all in a state to send to the sultan. At this she was greatly distressed, and began to cry with all her might. "Alas," said she, "what will become of me? I am sure, when I relate to the sultan what I have seen, that he will not believe me. How enraged also will he be with me!"

While she was in this distress, the grand vizier entered, and asked if the fish were ready. The cook then related all that had taken place, at which, as we may naturally suppose, he was much astonished: but without telling the sultan anything about it, he invented some excuse which satisfied him. He then sent directly for the fisherman; to whom, when he was come, he said, "Bring me four more fish, like those you brought before, for an accident has happened which prevents their being served up to the sultan." The fisherman did not tell him what the Genius had strictly advised him to do, but pleaded the length of the way as an excuse for not being able to procure any more that day; he promised, however, to bring them the next morning.

The fisherman, in order to be in time, set out before it was day, and went to the pond. He threw his nets, and drawing them out, found four more fish, like those he had taken the day before, each of a different colour. He returned directly, and brought them to the grand vizier by the time he had promised. The minister took them, and carried them into the kitchen, where he shut himself up with only the cook, who prepared to dress them before him. She put them on the fire as she had done the others on the preceding day. When they were dressed on one side, she turned them, and immediately the wall of the kitchen opened, and the same damsel appeared, with her myrtle in her hand. She approached the vessel in which the fish were, and striking one of them, addressed the same words to it she had before done; when they all, raising their heads, made the same answer. The damsel overturned the vessel with her rod as she had done before, and went back through the opening in the wall, where she had entered. The grand vizier witnessed all that passed. "This is very surprising," he cried, "and too extraordinary to be kept secret from the sultan's ears. I will myself go and inform him of this prodigy." He immediately, therefore, went, and gave an exact relation of all that had passed.

The sultan was much astonished, and became very anxious to see this wonder. For this purpose he again sent for the fisherman: "Friend," said he to him,

when he came, "canst thou not bring me four more fish of different colours?" "If your majesty," answered the fisherman, "will grant me three days, I can promise to do so." He obtained the time he wished, and went again, for the third time, to the pond. He was not less successful than before, and he caught four fish of different colours the first time he threw his nets. He neglected not to carry them directly to the sultan, who expressed the greater pleasure at seeing them as he did not expect them so soon, and he ordered four hundred pieces of money to be given to the fisherman.

As soon as the sultan had got the fish, he had them taken into his own cabinet, together with the different things that were necessary to dress them. Here he shut himself up with the grand vizier, who began to cook them, and put them on the fire in a proper vessel. As soon as they were done on one side, he turned them on the other. The wall of the cabinet immediately opened; but, instead of the beautiful damsel, there appeared a black, who was in the habit of a slave. This black was very large and gigantic, and held a large green rod in his hand. He advanced to the vessel, and touching one of the fish with his rod, he cried out in a terrible tone, "Fish, fish, art thou doing thy duty?" At these words, the fish lifted up their heads, and answered, "Yes, yes, we are: if you reckon, we reckon; if you pay your debts, we pay ours; if you fly, we conquer, and are content." The fish had scarcely said this, when the black overturned the vessel into the middle of the cabinet, and reduced the fish to the state of cinders. Having done so, he haughtily retired through the opening of the wall, which instantly closed, and appeared as perfect as before.

"After what I have seen," said the sultan to his grand vizier, "it is in vain for me to think of remaining at ease. It is certain that these fish signify something very extraordinary, which I wish to discover." He sent for the fisherman, and when he arrived, he said to him, "The fish thou hast brought me have caused me great uneasiness; where dost thou catch them?" "I caught them, sire," answered he, "in a pond, which is situated in the midst of four small hills, beyond the mountain you may see from hence." "Do you know that pond?" said the sultan to the vizier. "No, sire," answered he; "I have never even heard it mentioned, though I have hunted in the vicinity of the mountain, and beyond it, near sixty years." The sultan asked the fisherman about what distance the pond was from the palace; he replied that it was not more than three hours' journey. With this assurance, as there was still time to arrive there before night, the sultan ordered his whole court to get ready, while the fisherman served as a guide.

They all ascended the mountain, and in going down on the other side, they were much surprised by the appearance of a large plain, which no one had ever before remarked. They at length arrived at the pond, which they found situated exactly among four hills, as the fisherman had reported. Its water was so transparent, that they remarked all the fish to be of the same colours as those the fisherman had brought to the palace.

The sultan halted on the side of the pond; and, after observing the fish with signs of great admiration, he inquired of his emirs and all his courtiers if it could be possible that they had never seen this pond, which was so close to the city.—They all said they had never heard it even mentioned. "Since you all agree, then," said he, "that you have never heard it spoken of, and since I am not less astonished than you are at this novelty, I am resolved not to return to my palace till I have discovered for what reason this pond is now placed here, and why there are fish of only four colours in it." After having thus spoken, he ordered them to encamp around it; his own pavilion, and the tents of his immediate household, were pitched on the borders of the pond.

When the day closed, the sultan retired to his pavilion, and entered into a particular conversation with his vizier. "My mind," said he, "is much disturbed; this pond, suddenly placed here; this black, who appeared to us in my cabinet; these fish, too, whom we heard speak; all this so much excites my curiosity that I cannot conquer my impatience to be satisfied. It is on this account that I am absolutely determined to execute the design I meditate. I shall go quite alone from my camp, and order you to keep my departure a profound secret. Remain in my pavilion, and when my emirs and courtiers present themselves at the entrance to-morrow morning, send them away, and say I have a slight indisposition, and wish to remain alone. You will also continue to do so every day till my return."

The grand vizier endeavoured, by many arguments, to persuade the sultan not to do as he intended. He represented the great danger to which he exposed himself, and the unnecessary trouble and difficulties he might thus encounter, and probably to no purpose. All his eloquence, however, was exhausted, to no effect; the sultan did not alter his resolution, but prepared to set out. He put on a proper dress for walking, and armed himself with a sabre; and as soon as he found that everything in the camp was quiet, he departed, unaccompanied by any one.

He bent his course towards one of the small hills, which he ascended without much difficulty; and the descent on the other side was still easier. He then pursued his way over a plain, till the sun rose. He now perceived, in the distance before him, a large building, the sight of which filled him with joy, from the hopes of being able to gain some intelligence of what he wished to know. When he came near, he remarked that it was a magnificent palace, or rather a strong castle, built with polished black marble, and covered with fine steel, so bright that it was like a mirror. Delighted with having so soon met with something at least worthy his curiosity, he stopped opposite the front, and considered it with much attention; he then advanced towards the folding-doors, one of which was open. Though he might have gone in, he thought it better to knock. At first, he knocked gently, and waited some time: but, finding no one appear, he thought they might not have heard; he therefore knocked a second time, much louder; still no one came. He redoubled his efforts, but in vain. At this he was much astonished, as he could not imagine that a castle so well built as that was, could be deserted.—"If there be no person there," said the sultan to himself, "I have nothing to fear; and if there be any one, I have arms to defend myself with."

At last he entered, and when he was in the vestibule, he called out, "Is there no one here to receive a stranger, who is in want of refreshment on his journey?" He repeated it two or three times, as loud as he could; still there was no answer. This silence increased his astonishment. He passed on to a very spacious court, and looking on all sides, he could not discover a living creature. He then entered, and passed through some large halls, the carpets of which were of silk, the recesses and sofas entirely covered with the stuffs of Mecca, and the curtains before the doors of the richest manufactures of India, embroidered with gold and silver. He went on, and came to a most wonderful saloon, in the midst of which there was a large reservoir, with a lion of massive gold at each corner. Streams of water issued from the mouths of the four lions, and in falling, appeared to break in a thousand diamonds and pearls, which formed a good addition to a fountain that sprang from the middle of the basin, and rose almost to the top of a dome, beautifully painted in the arabesque style.

The castle was surrounded on three sides by a garden, which was embellished with all kinds of flowers, fountains, groves, and many other beauties; but what

rendered this spot still more enchanting was the multitude of birds, which filled the air with the sweetest notes. This was their constant habitation, because there were nets thrown entirely over the trees, which prevented their escape.

The sultan continued walking a long time from one apartment to another, where everything was grand and magnificent. Being rather fatigued, he sat down in an open cabinet, which looked into the garden. Here he meditated upon all he had seen, or might yet see, and was reflecting on the different objects, when suddenly a plaintive voice, accompanied by the most heart-rending cries, struck his ear. He listened attentively, and distinctly heard these melancholy words:—"O fortune, thou hast not suffered me long to enjoy my happy lot, but hast rendered me the most wretched of men; cease, I entreat thee, thus to persecute me, and, by a speedy death, put an end to my sufferings. Alas! is it possible I can still exist, after all the torments I have suffered?"

The sultan, much affected by these lamentable complaints, immediately got up, and went towards the spot whence they issued. He came to the entrance of a large hall; he drew the door-curtain aside, and saw a young man seated upon a sort of throne, raised a little from the ground. He appeared well made, and was very richly dressed, but deep sorrow was impressed on his countenance. The sultan approached, and saluted him. The youth returned the compliment by bending his head very low, but did not rise. "I am sure, sir," said he to the sultan, "I ought to get up to receive you, and show you all possible respect, but a most powerful reason prevents me; you will not therefore, I trust, take it ill." "I feel myself highly honoured, sir," replied the sultan, "by the good opinion you express of me. Whatever may be your motive for not rising, I willingly receive your apologies. Attracted by your complaints, and impelled by your sufferings, I come to offer you my assistance. I trust I shall be permitted to afford some consolation to you in your misfortunes, and I will use all my endeavours to do so. I flatter myself you will not object to relate the history of your sorrows to me. But, in the first place, I beg of you to inform me what that pond which is near this castle means, where there are fish of four different colours; how, also, this castle came here, and you thus in it and alone!"

Instead of answering these questions, the young man began to weep most bitterly. "How inconstant is fortune!" he cried; "she delights in crushing those whom she has elevated. Who can say they have ever enjoyed from her a life of calm and pure happiness?"

The sultan, touched with compassion at his situation, requested him again to relate the cause of such sorrow. "Alas, my lord!" answered the youth, "can I be otherwise than afflicted, or can these eyes ever cease from shedding tears?" At these words, he lifted up his robe, and the sultan perceived he was a man only to his waist, and that from thence to his feet he was changed into black marble.

You may easily imagine that the sultan was much surprised when he saw the deplorable state of the young man. "What you show me," said he to him, "fills me with horror, but at the same time excites my curiosity. I am impatient to learn your history, which must, no doubt, be very singular; and I am persuaded that the pond and the fish have some connexion with it. I entreat you, therefore, to relate it; and you may find consolation by doing so, for the unhappy often experience some relief in communicating their sorrows." "I will not refuse you this satisfaction," replied the young man, "although I cannot impart it without renewing the most poignant grief; but I must forewarn you to prepare your ears and your mind, nay, even your eyes, for what surpasses all conception."

THE HISTORY OF THE YOUNG KING OF THE
BLACK ISLES.

I MUST first inform you (continued he), that my father, who was called Mahmoud, was the king of this state. It is the kingdom of the Black Isles, which takes its name from four small neighbouring mountains, that were formerly islands; and the capital where my father resided was situated on the spot which is now occupied by that pond. You will know how these changes took place as I proceed with my history.

The king, my father, died at the age of seventy years. I had no sooner taken his place than I married, and the person whom I chose to partake of the royal dignities with me was my cousin. I had every reason to be satisfied with the proofs of affection I had received from her, and, on my part, I returned them with equal tenderness. Our happy union continued for five years, when I began to perceive that the queen, my cousin, no longer loved me.

One day after dinner, when she was gone to bathe, I felt myself inclined to sleep, and threw myself on a sofa; two of her women, who happened to be in the room, seated themselves, one at my head and the other at my feet, to fan me, as well for the purpose of refreshing me, as to keep off the flies, which might have disturbed my slumbers. They then, supposing me asleep, began to talk softly, but I had only closed my eyes, and so overheard their whole conversation.

"Is it not a pity," said one of them to the other, "that the queen does not love our king, who is such an amiable prince?" "Surely it is," replied the other; "and I cannot conceive why she goes out every night and leaves him; does he not perceive it?" "How should he perceive it?" resumed the first; "she mixes in his drink, every night, the juice of a certain herb, which makes him sleep all night so profoundly, that she has time to go wherever she likes; and when at break of day she returns to him, she awakes him by passing a particular scent under his nose."

You may judge, my lord, of the surprise which this discourse occasioned, as well as the sentiments with which it inspired me: nevertheless I had sufficient command over myself to suppress my emotions; I pretended to awake without having heard the conversation.

The queen returned from the bath; we supped together, and before we went to bed she presented me with a cup of water, which it was usual for me to take; but instead of drinking it, I approached a window that was open, and threw it out without her perceiving me. I then returned the cup into her own hands, that she might suppose I had drank the contents. We soon retired to rest, and shortly after, supposing that I was asleep, although I was not, she got up with so little precaution, that she said aloud, "Sleep, and mayst thou never wake more." She dressed herself quickly, and left the chamber.

The queen had no sooner quitted me than I got up, and dressed myself as quickly as possible, and taking my scimitar, I followed her so closely, that I heard her footsteps just before me, when regulating my steps by hers, I walked softly for fear of being heard. She passed through several floors, which opened by virtue of some magic words she pronounced; the last she opened was that of the garden, which she entered. I stopped at this door, that she might not see me, while she crossed a parterre; and following her with my eyes, as well as the obscurity of the night would permit, I remarked that she went into a little wood, the walks of which were enclosed by a thick hedge. I repaired thither by another way, and hiding myself behind the hedge of one of the paths, I perceived that she was walking with a man.

I did not fail to listen attentively to their discourse, when I heard what follows : "I do not deserve," said the queen to her lover, "your reproaches for my want of diligence; you well know the reason of it: but if all the marks of love which I have hitherto given you are not sufficient to persuade you of my sincerity, I am ready to give you still more convincing proofs of it; you have only to command: you know my power. I will, if you wish it, before the sun rises, change this great city and this beautiful palace into frightful ruins, which shall be inhabited only by wolves, and owls, and ravens. Shall I transport all the stones with which these walls are so strongly built, beyond Mount Caucasus, and farther than the boundaries of the habitable world? You have only to speak, and all this place shall be transformed."

As the queen finished this speech, she and her lover, having reached the end of the walk, turned to enter another, and passed before me: I had already drawn my scimitar, and as the lover was next me, I struck him on the neck, and he fell. I believed I had killed him, and with this persuasion, I retired precipitately, without discovering myself to the queen, whom I wished to spare, as she was my cousin.

Although her lover's wound was mortal, she yet contrived by her enchantments to preserve in him that kind of existence which can be called neither dead nor alive. As I traversed the garden to return to the palace, I heard the queen weeping bitterly, and judging of her grief by her cries, I was not sorry to have left him alive. When I reached my chamber, I went again to bed, and feeling satisfied with the punishment I had inflicted on the wretch who had offended me, I fell asleep. On waking the next morning, I found the queen by my side; I cannot say whether she was asleep or feigned it, but I got up without disturbing her, and retired to my closet, where I finished dressing: I afterwards attended the council; and on my return, the queen, dressed in mourning, her hair dishevelled and torn, presented herself before me. "Sire," said she, "I come to entreat your majesty not to be displeased at the state in which you now see me. I have just received intelligence of three events, which occasion the grief I so strongly feel, but can ill express." "What are these events, madam?" I inquired. "The death of the queen, my beloved mother," replied she; "that of the king, my father, who was killed in battle; and also of my brother, who fell down a precipice."

I was not sorry that she had invented this pretext to conceal the true cause of her affliction, and I imagined that she did not suspect me of having been the murderer of her lover. "Madam," said I, "I do not blame your sorrow; on the contrary, I assure you that I am not insensible to the cause. I should be much surprised if you were not affected by such a loss; weep, for your tears are an undoubted proof of your good heart; I hope, nevertheless, that time and reason will restore to you your wonted cheerfulness."

She retired to her apartment, where, abandoning herself to her grief, she passed a whole year in weeping and bewailing the fate of her lover. At the expiration of that time, she requested my permission to build a mausoleum for herself in the centre of the palace, where she said she wished to pass the remainder of her days. I did not refuse her, and she erected a magnificent palace with a dome, which may be seen from hence, and she called it the Palace of Tears.

When it was finished, she had her lover removed from the place whither she had transported him on the night I wounded him, and brought to this mausoleum. She had till that period preserved his life by giving him certain potions, which she administered herself, and continued to give him daily after his removal to the Palace of Tears.

All her enchantments, however, did not avail, for he was not only unable to

walk or stand, but had also lost the use of his speech, and gave no signs of life but by looks. Although the queen had only the consolation of seeing him and saying to him all the tender things that her love inspired, yet she constantly paid him two long visits every day. "I was well acquainted with this circumstance, but I pretended to be ignorant of it.

Excited by my curiosity, I went one day to the Palace of Tears to know what was the occupation of the princess, and concealing myself in a part where I could see and hear what passed, I heard her speak in this manner to her lover: "How bitter the affliction to me to see thee in this state! I feel as much as thyself the agonies thou endurest, but, dearest life, I am ever speaking to thee, and yet thou returnest no answer; how long will this distressing silence continue? Speak but once and I will be satisfied. Alas! these moments that I pass with thee, endeavouring to mitigate thy sufferings, are the happiest of my life. I cannot exist away from thee, and I should willingly prefer the pleasure of seeing thee continually to the empire of the whole universe."

This discourse, which was frequently interrupted by tears and sobs, at length exhausted my patience. I could no longer remain in concealment, and approaching her, "Madam," said I, "you have wept enough; it is now time to have done with a grief which dishonours us both; you forget what you owe to me, as well as what you owe to yourself." "Sire," replied she, "if you still retain any regard for me, I entreat you to leave me to my sorrows, which time can neither diminish nor relieve."

I endeavoured, but in vain, to bring her to a sense of her duty; and finding that all my arguments only increased her obstinacy, I at last desisted and left her. She continued to visit her lover every day; and for two years she was inconsolable.

I went a second time to the Palace of Tears, while she was there. I hid myself as before, and heard her say, "It is now three years that thou hast not spoken to me; nor dost thou return the proofs of affection and fondness which my complaints and sighs must convince thee I feel: is it from insensibility or disdain? Hast thou, O tomb, destroyed that excess of tenderness which he bore me? Hast thou closed for ever those dear eyes, which beamed with love, and formed all my pleasure? Ah no, I cannot think it; rather let me say, thou art become the deposit of the rarest treasure the world ever saw."

I avow to you, my lord, that I was enraged at these words; for in truth this cherished lover, this adored mortal, was not at all what you would imagine. He was a black Indian, one of the original inhabitants of this country. I was, as I have said, so enraged at this speech, that I suddenly showed myself, and addressing myself in a similar manner to the tomb, I said, "Why dost thou not, O tomb, swallow up this monster, who is even disgusting to human nature? or rather, why dost thou not consume both the lover and the mistress?"

I had hardly finished these words, when the queen, who was seated near the black, started up like a fury. "Ah, wretch!" said she to me, "it is thou who hast been the cause of my grief; think not that I am ignorant of it. I have already dissembled too long. It was thy barbarous hand which reduced the object of my affection to the miserable state he now is in. And hast thou the cruelty to come and insult my despair?" "Yes," cried I, interrupting her, and transported with anger, "I have chastised the monster as he deserved, and I ought to treat thee in the same manner. I repent not having already done it, for thou hast too long abused my goodness." In saying this, I drew my scimitar, and raised my arm to punish her. "Moderate thy rage," said she to me, with a disdainful smile, and regarding my motions with a tranquil air,

and at the same instant she pronounced some words which I did not understand, and added, "By virtue of my enchantments, I command thee from this moment to become half marble, and half man." Immediately, my lord, I was changed to what you see me; already dead among the living, and living among the dead.

As soon as this cruel enchantress, for she is unworthy of bearing the title of queen, had thus transformed me, and by means of her magic had conveyed me to this apartment, she destroyed my capital, which was both flourishing and well inhabited; she annihilated the palaces, public places, and markets; turned the whole place into a lake, or pond, and rendered the country, as you may perceive, quite a desert. The four sorts of fish which are in the pond are four different classes of inhabitants who professed different religions, and inhabited the capital. The white were Mussulmen; the red, Persians, who worship fire; the blue, Christians; and the yellow, Jews; the four little hills were four islands, whence the name of the kingdom originated. I was informed of all this by the enchantress, who herself related the effects of her rage. Nor was even this all; she did not confine her fury to the destruction of my empire, and to my enchantment, for she comes every day and gives me a hundred blows with a thong, made of a bull's hide, upon my shoulders, from whence she draws blood at every stroke. As soon as she has finished this punishment, she covers me with a thick stuff made of goat's hair, and puts a robe of rich brocade over it, not for the sake of honouring, but of mocking me.—In saying this, the young king of the Black Isles could not refrain from tears; and the sultan's heart was so oppressed, he could not offer him any consolation. The young king then, lifting up his eyes towards heaven, exclaimed, "I submit, O powerful Creator of all things, to thy judgments, and to the decrees of thy providence. Since it is thy pleasure, I patiently endure every evil; yet I trust thy infinite goodness will one day recompense me."

"Inform me," cried the sultan, affected by the recital of so strange a story, and eager to avenge such injuries, "inform me where this perfidious enchantress resides, and where also is this infamous paramour, whom she has entombed before his death." "My lord," answered the prince, "he, as I have before mentioned, is at the Palace of Tears, in a tomb formed like a dome; and this palace has a communication with the castle on the side towards the entrance. I cannot exactly tell you to what spot the enchantress has retired, but she visits her lover every day at sunrise, after having inflicted on me the sanguinary punishment I related; and you may easily judge that I cannot defend myself from such great cruelty. She always brings with her a sort of liquor, which is the only thing that is able to keep him alive; and she never ceases to complain of the silence which he has invariably kept since he was wounded."

"No one, prince," replied the sultan, "deserves greater commiseration than yourself; nor can any one be more sensible of your misfortune than I am. A more extraordinary fate can never have happened to any; and they who may hereafter compose your history, will be able to relate an event the most surprising of any hitherto recorded. One thing only is wanting to complete it, and that is for you to be revenged; nor will I leave any thing untried to accomplish it." The sultan having first informed the prince who he was, and the reason of his entering the castle, consulted with him on the best means of affording him a just revenge; and a plan occurred to the sultan, which he directly communicated. They then agreed upon the steps it was necessary to take in order to insure success; and they deferred the execution of the plan till the following day. In the mean time, as the night was far advanced, the sultan took some repose. The young prince, as usual, passed his time in continual watchfulness, for he was unable to sleep since his enchantment: the

hopes, however slight, which he cherished of being soon relieved from his sufferings, constantly occupied his thoughts.

The sultan rose as soon as it was day; and having concealed his robe and external dress, which might encumber him, he went to the Palace of Tears. He found it illuminated by a multitude of torches of white wax; and a delicious perfume issuing from various beautiful golden vases, regularly arranged, struck his senses. As soon as he perceived the bed on which the black was laid, he drew his sabre, and destroyed, without resistance, the little remains of life in this wretch. He then dragged the body into the court of the castle, and threw it into a well. Having done this, he returned, and lay down in the black's place, hiding his sabre under the covering, and remained there in order to complete what he projected. The enchantress arrived soon after: her first business was to go into the apartment where the king of the Black Isles, her husband, was. She directly stripped him, and, with unexampled barbarity, began to inflict upon his shoulders the accustomed number of blows. The poor prince filled the whole building with his cries, and conjured her in the most pathetic manner to have pity on him: the wretch, however, ceased not to beat him till she had completed the hundred. "Thou hadst no compassion on my lover," said she, "expect therefore none from me." As soon as she had finished, she threw the coarse garment made of goat-skin over him, and then the robe of brocade. She next went to the Palace of Tears; and, on entering, began to renew her lamentations. When she approached the couch, where she thought her lover always remained, she exclaimed, "What cruelty to have thus destroyed the tranquil joy of so tender and fond a mistress as I am! Cruel prince, thou reproachest me with being inhuman when I make thee feel the effects of my resentment, and has not thy barbarity far exceeded my revenge? Hast thou not, traitor, in destroying almost the existence of so adorable an object, equally destroyed mine? Alas!" added she, addressing herself to the sultan, whom she took for the black, "wilt thou always, light of my life, preserve this silence? Art thou resolved to let me die without the consolation of hearing thee again declare that thou lovest me. Utter at least one word, I conjure thee."

The sultan then, pretending to awake from a profound sleep, and imitating the language of the blacks, answered the queen in a solemn tone. "There is no might, or power, but in God alone, who is all powerful." At these words the enchantress, to whom they were unexpected, gave a violent scream through excess of joy. "My dear lord," she exclaimed, "do you deceive me? is what I hear true? Is it really you who speak?" "Wretched woman," replied the sultan, "art thou worthy of an answer?" "What!" cried the queen, "dost thou reproach me?" "The cries, the tears, the groans of thy husband," answered the supposed black, "whom you every day beat with so much indignity and barbarity, continually prevent my rest; I should have been cured long since, and recovered the use of my tongue, if you had disenchanting him. This, and this only, is the cause of my silence, and of which you so continually complain." "Well, then," said the enchantress, "to satisfy you, I am ready to do what you command: do you wish him to re-assume his first form?" "Yes," replied the sultan; "and hasten to set him free, that I may no longer be disturbed by his cries."

The queen immediately went out, from the Palace of Tears; and taking a vessel of water, she pronounced over it some words, which caused it instantly to boil, as if it had been placed on a fire. She proceeded to the apartment where the young king, her husband, was. "If the Creator of all things," said she, throwing the water over him, "hath formed thee as thou now art, or if he is angry with thee, do not change; but if thou art in that state by virtue

of my enchantment, re-assume thy natural form, and become the same as before." She had hardly concluded, when the prince, recovering his first shape, rose up, with all possible joy, and returned thanks to God. "Go," said the enchantress, addressing him, "hasten from this castle, and never return, lest it should cost thee thy life." The young king yielded to necessity, and left the queen without replying a word. He concealed himself in some secure spot, where he impatiently awaited the completion of the sultan's design, the commencement of which had been so successful.

The enchantress then returned to the Palace of Tears; and on entering, said to him, whom she supposed to be the black, "I have done, my love, what you ordered me: nothing, therefore, now prevents your getting up, and affording me the satisfaction I have so long been deprived of." The sultan, still imitating the language of the blacks, answered in rather a sharp tone, "What you have yet done is not sufficient for my cure. You have destroyed only a part of the evil, but you must strike at the root." "What do you mean by the root; my amiable black?" answered she. "What can I mean," he cried, "but the city and its inhabitants, and the four isles, which you have destroyed by your magic? Every day towards midnight the fish constantly raise their heads out of the pond, and call for vengeance against us both. This is the real cause of the delay of my recovery. Go quickly and re-establish everything in its former state; and on thy return I will give you my hand, and you shall assist me in rising."

The queen, exulting in the expectations these words produced, joyfully exclaimed, "You shall soon then, my life, recover your health, for I will instantly go and do what you have commanded. She went the very next moment, and when she arrived on the border of the pond, she took a little water in her hand, and scattered it about. She had no sooner done so, and pronounced certain words over the fish and the pond, than the city instantly appeared. The fish became men, women, and children; Mahometans, Christians, Persians, and Jews; freemen or slaves; in short, each took his natural form. The houses and shops became filled with inhabitants, who found everything in the same situation and order in which they were previous to the change. The officers and attendants of the sultan, who were very numerous, and who were encamped directly where the great place or square happened to be, were astonished at finding themselves on a sudden in the midst of a large, well-built, and inhabited city.

But to return to the enchantress: as soon as she had completed this change she hastened back to the Palace of Tears, to enjoy the reward of her labours. "My dear lord," she cried on entering, "I am returned to participate in the pleasure of your renewed health, for I have done all you have required of me; arise, and give me your hand." "Come near, then," said the sultan, still imitating the manner of the blacks. She did so. "Nearer still," he cried. She obeyed. Then raising himself up, he seized her so suddenly by the arms, that she had no opportunity of recognising who it was; and with one stroke of his sabre, he smote her in twain, the pieces falling on each side of him. Having done this, he left the carcase in the same place, and went to seek for the prince of the Black Isles, who waited with the greatest impatience for him. "Rejoice, prince," said he, embracing him, "you have nothing more to fear, for your cruel enemy no longer exists."

The young prince thanked the sultan in a way which proved that his heart was truly penetrated with gratitude; and as a reward for the important service he had rendered him, he wished him a long life, and the greatest prosperity. "May you too live happily and at peace in your capital," replied the sultan to him; "and should you hereafter have a wish to visit mine, which is so near, I

shall receive you with the truest pleasure, and you shall be as highly honoured and respected as in your own." "Powerful monarch," answered the prince, "to whom I am so much indebted, do you think you are very near your capital?" "Certainly," replied the sultan, "I think so, at least that I am not more than four or five hours' journey." "It is a whole year's journey," added the prince, "although I believe you might come here in the time you mention, because mine was enchanted; but since it is no longer so, things are changed. This, however, shall not prevent my following you, were it necessary to go to the very extremity of the earth. You are my liberator; and to show you every mark of my gratitude as long as I live, I shall freely accompany you, and resign my kingdom without regret."

The sultan was extremely surprised to find that he was so distant from his dominions, and could not comprehend how it happened; but the young king of the Black Isles convinced him so fully of the possibility, that he no longer doubted it. "It matters not, then," resumed the sultan; "the trouble of returning to my dominions will be sufficiently recompensed by the satisfaction arising from having assisted you, and from having acquired a son in you; for, as you will do me the honour to accompany me, I shall look upon you as such; and having no children of my own, I from this moment make you my heir and successor." This interview between the sultan and the king of the Black Isles was terminated by the most affectionate embraces, after which the young prince prepared for his journey. In three weeks he was ready to depart, greatly regretted by his court and subjects, who received from his hands a near relation of his as their king.

At length the sultan and the prince set out with a hundred camels laden with inestimable riches, which had been selected from the treasury of the young king, who was accompanied by fifty handsome nobles, well mounted and equipped. Their journey was a pleasant one; and when the sultan, who had despatched couriers to give notice of his arrival, and relate the reason of his delay, drew near to his capital, the principal officers, whom he had left there, came to receive him, and to assure him that his long absence had not occasioned any change in his empire. The inhabitants, also, crowded to meet him, and welcome him with acclamations and every demonstration of joy, which lasted for several days.

The day after his arrival, the sultan assembled his courtiers, and gave them an ample detail of the occurrences which, contrary to his wishes, had delayed his return: he then declared to them his intention of adopting the king of the four Black Isles, who had left a large kingdom to accompany and live with him; and at last, to reward the fidelity with which they served him, he bestowed presents on all, according to their rank and station.

With regard to the fisherman, as he had been the first cause of the deliverance of the young prince, the sultan overwhelmed him with rewards, and made him and his family happy and comfortable for the rest of their days.

THE HISTORY OF THE THREE CALENDERS, SONS OF KINGS, AND OF FIVE LADIES OF BAGDAD.

DURING the reign of the Caliph Haroun Alraschid there lived at Bagdad a porter, who, notwithstanding his low and laborious profession, was nevertheless a man of wit and humour. One morning, when he was standing with a large basket before him, in a place where he usually waited for employment, a young lady of a fine figure, covered with a large muslin veil, came up to him, and said

with a pleasing air, "Porter, take up your basket and follow me." The porter, delighted with these few words, pronounced in so agreeable a manner, put it on his head, and went after the lady, saying, "Oh, happy day! Oh, happy meeting!"

The lady stopped at a closed door, and knocked. A venerable Christian with a long white beard opened it, and she put some money into his hands without saying a single word; but the Christian, who knew what she wanted, went in, and shortly after brought out a large jar of excellent wine. "Take this jar," said the lady to the porter, "and put it in the basket." This being done, she desired him to follow her, and walked on; the porter still exclaiming, "Oh, day of happiness! Oh, day of agreeable surprise and joy!"

The lady stopped at the shop of a seller of fruits and flowers, where she chose various sorts of apples, apricots, peaches, lemons, citrons, oranges, myrtles, sweet basil, lilies, jessamine, and some other sweet-scented flowers and plants. She told the porter to put all those things in his basket and follow her. Passing by a butcher's shop, she ordered five and twenty pounds of his finest meat to be weighed, which was also put into the porter's basket.

At another shop she bought some capers, tarragon, small cucumbers, parsley, and other herbs, pickled in vinegar: at another, some pistachios, walnuts, hazelnuts, almonds, kernels of the pine, and other similar fruits: at a third she purchased all sorts of almond patties. The porter, in putting all these things into his basket, which began to fill it, said, "My good lady, you should have told me that you intended buying so many things, and I would have provided a horse, or rather a camel, to carry them. I shall have more than I can lift if you add much to what is already here." The lady laughed at this speech, and again desired him to follow her.

She then went into a druggist's, where she furnished herself with all sorts of sweet-scented waters, with cloves, nutmeg, pepper, ginger, a large piece of ambergris and several other Indian spices, which completely filled the porter's basket, whom she still ordered to follow her. He did so till they arrived at a magnificent house, the front of which was ornamented with handsome columns, and at the entrance was a door of ivory. Here they stopped, and the lady gave a gentle knock at the door. While they waited for it to be opened, the porter's mind was filled with a thousand different thoughts. He was surprised that a lady, dressed as this was, should perform the office of the housekeeper, for he conceived it impossible for her to be a slave. Her air was so noble that he supposed her free, if not a person of distinction. He was wishing to ask her some questions concerning her quality and situation, but just as he was preparing to speak, another female, who opened the door, appeared to him so beautiful, that he was silent through astonishment, or rather he was so struck with the brilliancy of her charms, that he was very near letting his basket and all that was in it fall, so much did this object make him forget himself. He thought he had never seen any beauty in his whole life that equalled her who was before him. The lady who had brought the porter observed the disturbed state of his mind, and well knew the cause of it. This discovery diverted her; and she took so much pleasure in examining the countenance of the porter, that she forgot the door was open. "Come in, sister," said the beautiful portress. "What do you wait for? Don't you see that this poor man is so heavily laden he can hardly bear it?"

As soon as she and the porter were come in, the lady who opened the door shut it; and all three, after passing through a handsome vestibule, crossed a very spacious court, surrounded by an open gallery, or corridor, which communicated with many magnificent apartments, all on the same floor. At the bottom of this court there was a sort of cabinet richly furnished, with a throne

of amber in the middle, supported by four ebony pillars, enriched with diamonds and pearls of an extraordinary size, and covered with red satin, relieved by a bordering of Indian gold of admirable workmanship. In the middle of the court there was a large basin lined with white marble, and full of the finest transparent water, which rushed from the mouth of a lion of gilt bronze.

Although the porter was so laden, it did not prevent him from admiring the magnificence of this house, and the neatness and regularity with which everything was arranged; but what principally attracted his attention was a third lady, who appeared still more beautiful than the second, and who was seated on the throne before mentioned. As soon as she perceived the other two females, she came down from the throne, and advanced towards them. The porter conjectured from the looks and behaviour of the two first ladies that this was the principal personage; and he was not mistaken. This lady was called Zobeidè, she who opened the door was called Safiè, and the name of the one who had been for the provisions was Aminè.

"You do not, my dear sisters," said Zobeidè, accosting the other two, "perceive that this man is almost fainting under his load? Why do you not discharge him?" Aminè and Safiè then took the basket, one before and the other behind; Zobeidè also assisted, and all three put it on the ground. They then began to empty it, and when they had done, the agreeable Aminè took out her purse and rewarded the porter very liberally. He was well satisfied with what he received, and was taking up his basket to go, but could not muster sufficient resolution, so much was he delighted by the sight of three such rare beauties, who now appeared to him equally charming; for Aminè had also taken off her veil, and he found her quite as handsome as the others. The thing that puzzled him most was not seeing any man in the house; and yet a great part of the provisions he brought, such as dried fruits, cakes, and sweetmeats, were most adapted to those who wish to drink much and feast.

Zobeidè at first thought the porter was waiting to get breath, but observing him remain a long time, she asked him what he waited for, and whether he was sufficiently paid. "Give him something more," added she, speaking to Aminè, "and let him be satisfied." "Madam," answered the porter, "it is not that which detains me; I am already almost too well paid for my trouble. I know very well that I am guilty of an incivility in staying where I ought not; but I hope you will have the goodness to pardon it, from the astonishment I experience in observing no man among three ladies of such uncommon beauty. A party of ladies without men is as melancholy and stupid as a party of men without ladies." To this he added some pleasantries in proof of what he advanced. He did not forget to repeat what they say at Bagdad, that there was no comfort at table unless there were four; and he concluded by saying, that as there were three they had the greatest want of a fourth.

The ladies laughed heartily at the reasoning of the porter. Zobeidè, however, then addressed him in a serious manner. "You carry your fooleries, my friend, a little too far; but though you do not deserve that I should enter into any explanation with you, I will at once inform you that we are three sisters, who arrange all our affairs so secretly that no one knows anything of them. We have too great reason to fear a discovery to permit us to impart our arrangements; and an established author, whom we have read, says: 'Keep thy own secret and tell it to no one; for he who reveals a secret is no longer master of it. If thy own breast cannot contain thy secret, how can the breast of him to whom you intrust it?'"

"Ladies," replied the porter, "from your appearance alone, I thought you possessed a singular degree of merit; and I perceive that I am not mistaken. Although fortune has not been so propitious to me as to bring me up to any

profession superior to the one I follow, yet I have cultivated my mind as much as I was able, by reading books of science and history; and permit me, I entreat, to say, that I also have read in another a maxim, which I have always happily practised: 'Conceal thy secret,' he says, 'only from such as are known to be indiscreet, and who will abuse thy confidence; but make no difficulty in discovering it to prudent men, because they know how to keep it.' The secret, then, with me, is as safe as locked up in a cabinet, the key of which is lost, and the door sealed."

Zobeidè saw that the porter was not deficient in cleverness; but thinking that he was desirous of being at the entertainment they were going to have, she good-humouredly replied, "You know that we are preparing to regale ourselves, and you must also know we cannot do this but at a considerable expense; and it would not be just that you should partake of the feast without bearing part of the cost." The beautiful Safè was of the same opinion as her sister. "My friend," she said to the porter, "have you never heard the common saying—'If you bring something, you shall return with something; if you bring nothing, you shall carry nothing back?'"

The porter would have been obliged to retire in confusion, in spite of his rhetoric, had it not been for Aminè, who took his part very strongly. "My dear sisters," she said to Zobeidè and Safè, "I entreat you to permit him to remain with us. It is unnecessary to tell you he will divert us, for you must see he is capable of it. I assure you, that had it not been for his readiness, quickness, and courage to follow me, I should not have executed so many commissions in so short a time. Besides, if I were to repeat to you all the amusing things he said to me on the way, you would not be much surprised that I am become his advocate."

At this speech of Aminè's, the porter, in a transport of joy, fell on his knees, and kissed the ground at the feet of this charming female. "My dear lady," said he, raising himself, "you have from this moment begun my happiness, and placed it almost at its summit, by so generous an act, for which I can never sufficiently express my gratitude. In short, ladies," added he, addressing the three sisters at once, "do not suppose, because you have done me so great an honour, that I will abuse it, and that I shall consider myself as a man who is worthy of it; on the contrary, I shall ever regard myself as the humblest of your slaves." In saying this, he wished to return the money he had received; but the grave Zobeidè ordered him to keep it. "What we have once given," she said, "as a recompense to those who have rendered us any service, never returns. But, in agreeing that you should remain with us, it is not only on condition that you keep the secret we are going to intrust you with, but we also require that you shall strictly observe the rules of propriety and decorum." While she was speaking, the beautiful Aminè took off her walking dress, and fastening her robe to her girdle, in order to be more at liberty to prepare the table, she placed on it various kinds of meat, and put some bottles of wine and several golden cups upon a sideboard. This done, the ladies seated themselves round the table, and made the porter place himself by their side, who was delighted beyond measure at finding himself at table with three persons of such extraordinary beauty.

They had scarcely begun to eat, when Aminè, who had placed herself near the buffet, or sideboard, took a bottle and goblet, and poured some for herself. Having drank the first glass, according to the Arabian custom, she then poured out one for each of her sisters, who drank it, one after the other. Then, filling the same goblet for the fourth time, she presented it to the porter, who, in taking it, kissed her hand, and before he drank it, he sung a song, the meaning of which was, that as the wind carried with it the odour of any perfumed spot

over which it passed, so the wine which he was about to drink, coming from her hand, acquired a more exquisite flavour than it naturally possessed. This song pleased them very much, and they each sung in their turn. In short, the whole company were in most excellent spirits during the repast, which lasted a long time, and was accompanied with everything that could render it agreeable.

The day began to close, when Safie, in the name of her sisters, said to the porter, "Arise, and go; it is time to retire." To this the porter, not having resolution to quit them, answered, "Ah, ladies! where would you command me to go, in the state I am in? I am almost beside myself, from gazing on you, and the good cheer you have given me; and I shall never find the way to my own house. Allow me the night to recover myself in; I will pass it wherever you please; but less time will not restore me to the state I was in when I came here, and even then I doubt I shall leave the better part of myself behind."

Aminé again took the part of the porter. "He is right, my sister," she exclaimed; "I am convinced of the propriety of his demand. He has sufficiently diverted us; and if you wish to believe me, or rather, if you love me, I am sure you will suffer him to pass the evening with us." "We cannot refuse any request of yours, my sister," replied Zobeide. "Porter," she added, addressing herself to him, "we wish to grant you even this favour, but we must premise a fresh condition: whatever we may do in your presence, with respect to yourself or anything else, take great care that you do not ask the reason; for in questioning us about things that do not at all concern you, you may hear what will not please you. Take care, therefore, and be not too curious in attempting to discover the motives of our actions."

"Madam," replied the porter, "I promise to observe the conditions with so much exactitude that you shall have no reason to reproach me with having infringed them, and even still less to punish my indiscretion. My tongue shall be motionless, and my eyes shall be like a mirror, that preserves no part of the objects it receives." "To let you see," said Zobeide, with a serious air, "that what we require of you is not newly established among us, observe what is written over the door, on the inside." The porter went and read these words, which were written in large letters of gold:—WHOEVER TALKS ABOUT WHAT DOES NOT CONCERN HIM, OFTEN HEARS WHAT DOES NOT PLEASE HIM! He came back directly, and said to the three sisters, "I swear to you, ladies, that you shall not hear me speak a word concerning anything which does not regard me, and in which you have any interest."

This being settled, Aminé brought supper; and when she had lighted up the hall with numerous candles, prepared with aloes and ambergris, which scattered a very agreeable perfume, and cast a brilliant light, she seated herself at the table, with her sisters and the porter. They began to eat, drink, sing, and recite verses. The ladies took pleasure in making the porter intoxicated, under the pretence of making him drink to their health. Wit and repartee were not wanting. They were, at length, all in the best humour, when they suddenly heard a knocking at the gate. They instantly got up, and all ran to open it; but Safie, to whom this office more particularly belonged, was the most active. The other two, seeing her before them, stopped, and waited till she came back to inform them who could have any business with them at so late an hour. Safie soon returned. "A charming opportunity, my sisters, offers itself, to spend a great part of the night very pleasantly; and if you are of the same opinion as I am, we will not let it escape us. There are three calenders at the door; at least, they appear so by their dress; but what will doubtless surprise you is, that they are all three blind of the right eye, and

have their heads, beards, and eyebrows shaved. They say that they are only just arrived at Bagdad, where they have never been before; and, as it is dark, and they know not where to lodge, they knocked at our door, by chance; and entreat us, for the love of God, to have the charity to take them in. They care not where we put them, provided they are under cover; and will be satisfied even with a stable. They are young and well made, and appear to possess some spirit; but I cannot, without laughing, think of their amusing and uniform figures." Safië could not indeed refrain from laughing most heartily at this moment, nor could either her sisters or the porter do otherwise than join in it. "Shall we," said she, "let them come in? It is impossible but that, with such men as I have described, we shall finish the day still better than we begun it. They will divert us very much, and they will be of no expense to us, since they only ask a lodging for one night, and it is their intention to leave us as soon as it is day."

Zobeidè and Aminè made some difficulty in agreeing to the request of Safië, and she herself well knew the reason of it, but expressed so great a desire to have her way, that they could not refuse her. "Go," said Zobeidè to her, "and let them come in; but do not fail to caution them not to speak about what does not concern them, and make them read the inscription over the inside of the door." At these words, Safië joyfully ran to open the door, and soon returned, accompanied by the three calenders.

On entering they made a low bow to the sisters, who had risen to receive them, and who obligingly told them they were welcome, and that they were happy in being able to oblige them and contribute towards lessening the fatigue of their journey. They then invited their new guests to sit down with them. The magnificence of the place and the kindness of the ladies gave the calenders a very high idea of the beautiful hostess and her sisters; but before they took their places, having by chance cast their eyes towards the porter, and observing that he was dressed very like other calenders, from whom they differed in many points of discipline, and whose beard and eyebrows were not shaved, one of them said, "This man appears to be one of our Arabian brethren who revolted."

The porter, half-asleep, and heated with the wine he had drunk, was much disturbed at these words; and, without getting up, he said to the calenders, casting at the same time a fierce look at them, "Seat yourselves, and meddle not with what does not concern you. Have you not read the inscription over the door? Do not pretend, then, to make the world live after your fashion, but live according to ours." "My good friend," replied the calender who had before spoken, "do not be angry, for we should be very sorry to give you any cause; on the contrary, we are ready to receive your commands." The dispute would not have ended here had not the ladies interfered and pacified all parties.

When the calenders were seated, the sisters helped them, and the delighted Safië, in particular, took care to supply them with wine. When they had both eaten and drunk as much as they wished, they intimated that they should be happy to give them some music if they had any instruments, and would order them to be brought. They accepted the offer with pleasure; and the beautiful Safië immediately got up to inquire after some, and returned the next moment, and offered them a flute of that country, also another used in Persia, and a tambour de basque. Each calender received from her hand that instrument he liked best, and they all began to play a little air. The females were acquainted with the words, which were very lively, and accompanied the air with their voices, frequently interrupting each other with fits of laughter, from the nature of the words.

In the midst of this entertainment, and when the party were highly delighted, they heard a knock at the door. Safiè immediately left off singing, and went to see who it was.

"But I must now inform you, sire," said Scheherazadè to the sultan in this place, "that it is proper for your majesty to know how any one came to knock so late at the door of this house. The caliph Haroun Alraschid made it a practice to go very often, during the night, through the city, in disguise, in order to discover whether everything was quiet. On this evening, therefore, the caliph set out from his palace at his accustomed hour, accompanied by Giafar, his grand vizier, and Mesrour, chief of the eunuchs, all three disguised as merchants. In passing through the street where these ladies lived, the prince heard the sound of the instruments, interrupted by laughter, and said to his vizier, "Go and knock at the door of that house, where I hear so much noise; I wish to gain admittance, and learn the cause of it." The vizier endeavoured to persuade the caliph that they were only women, who were making merry that evening, and the wine seemed to have exhilarated their spirits; and that they ought not to expose themselves where it was probable they might meet with some insult; besides, the time, he said, was improper, and it was useless to disturb their amusements. "Never mind," said the caliph; "knock, as I order you."

It was, then, the grand vizier Giafar, who had knocked at the door by order of the caliph, who wished not to be known. Safiè opened it, and the vizier observed by the light of a candle she carried that she was very beautiful. He played his part very well. He first made a most profound reverence, and then with a respectful air he said, "Madam, we are three merchants of Moussoul, and arrived here about ten days ago, with some very rich merchandise, which we have deposited in a khan, where we have taken up our lodging. We have been to spend the day with a merchant of this city, who invited us to go to see him. He treated us with a fine collation; and as the wine we drunk put us into a very good humour, he sent for a company of dancers. The night was already far advanced, and while we were playing on our instruments, the others dancing, and the whole company making a great noise, the watch happened to pass by, and obliged us to open the door. Some of the company were arrested: we were, however, so fortunate as to escape, by getting over a wall. But," added the vizier, "as we are strangers, and have taken perhaps rather more wine than we ought, we are afraid of meeting with a second party of the watch, or perhaps the same, before we arrive at our khan, which is at a considerable distance from hence. And we should even then get there to no purpose, for the gate would be shut, and whoever may come there, they will not open it till morning. This is the reason, madam, that as we heard, in passing by, the sound of instruments and voices, we thought all those, who belonged to the house, were not yet retired; and we took the liberty to knock, to beg you to afford us a retreat till the morning. If we appear to you worthy of taking a part in your amusements, we will endeavour, as far as we are able, to contribute to it, in order to repair the interruption we have caused; if not, do us at least the favour to suffer us to pass the night under the cover of your vestibule."

During this speech of Giafar, the beautiful Safiè had an opportunity of examining the vizier and the two persons, whom he also called merchants, and judging from their countenances that they were not common men, she said, that she was not mistress, but if they would give themselves a moment's patience she would return and bring the answer. Safiè went and related all this to her sisters, who hesitated some time as to what they ought to do. But they were

naturally kind, and as they had conferred the same favour on the three calenders, they resolved to permit these also to come in. The caliph, the grand vizier, and the chief of the eunuchs, being introduced by the beautiful Safiè, saluted the ladies and the calenders with great civility. They, supposing them merchants, returned it in the same manner; and Zobeidè, as the principal person, with that grave and serious air, which so well suited her, said, "You are welcome, but in the first place, do not take it ill, if we ask of you one favour." "What favour," cried the vizier, "can we refuse to such beautiful ladies?" "It is," replied Zobeidè, "to have only eyes, and no speech; to forbear from asking questions about what you may see, in order to learn the cause; and not to speak about what does not concern you, for fear you should hear what will not be pleasant to you." "You shall be obeyed, madam," replied the vizier, "for we are neither censurers nor curious, imprudent persons. It is enough for us to attend to our own business, without meddling with what does not regard us." After this, each seated himself, and the conversation became general, and they drank to the health of the new guests.

While the vizier Giafar entertained them, the caliph ceased not from admiring the extraordinary beauty, the great elegance, the lively disposition and spirit of the ladies; while the appearance of the three calenders, all blind of the right eye, surprised him very much. He anxiously wished to learn the cause of this singularity, but the conditions they had imposed upon him and his companions prevented any inquiry. Besides all this, when he reflected upon the richness of the services and furniture, with the regularity and arrangement everywhere apparent, he could hardly persuade himself it was not the effect of enchantment.

The conversation having fallen upon the various sorts of amusement, and the different modes of enjoying life, the calenders got up and danced in their peculiar way, which much augmented the good opinion the ladies had already conceived of them, and attracted also the applause and esteem of the caliph and his company. As soon as the calenders had finished, Zobeidè got up, and taking Aminè by the hand, said to her, "Come, sister, the company shall not think that we will put them under any restraint, nor shall their presence prevent us from doing as we have always been accustomed." Aminè, who perfectly understood what her sister meant, got up and took away the dishes, tables, bottles, glasses, and also the instruments on which the calenders had played. Nor did Safiè remain idle; she swept the hall, put everything in its proper place, snuffed the candles, and added more aloë-wood and ambergris. Having done this, she requested the three calenders to sit on a sofa on one side, and the caliph and his company on the other. "Get up," said she then to the porter, looking at him, "and be ready to assist in whatever we want you; a man like you, as strong as the house, ought never to remain idle." The porter had slept till he was rather more sober; he got up, therefore, very quickly, and after fastening his cloak to his girdle, "I am ready," he cried, "to do anything you please." "That is well," answered Safiè, "and you shall not remain long with your arms crossed." A little while after, Aminè came in with a sort of seat, which she placed in the middle of the room. She then went to the door of a closet, and having opened it, she made a sign to the porter to approach. "Come and assist me," she cried. He did so, and went in with her, and returned a moment after, followed by two black dogs, each of which had a collar with a chain fastened to it, by which he held them. He brought these dogs, which appeared to have been very ill-used and beaten with a whip, into the middle of the room.

Zobeidè, who was sitting between the calenders and the caliph, then got up, and approaching to the porter in a very grave manner, "We must," cried she, with a deep sigh, "do our duty." She then turned up her sleeves, so as to uncover

her arms up to the elbow, and after taking a whip which Safiè presented to her, "Porter," she said, "take one of these dogs to my sister Aminè, and then come to me with the other." The porter did as he was ordered; and as he approached Zobeidè, the dog which he held immediately began to howl, and, turning towards her, lifted up its head in a most supplicating manner. But she, without regarding the melancholy expressions of the dog, which must have excited pity, or its cries, which filled the whole house, flogged it till she was out of breath, and when she had not strength left to beat it any more, she threw away the whip; then, taking the chain from the porter, she took up the dog by the paws, and both looking at each other with a melancholy air, they mingled their tears together. Zobeidè, after this, took out her handkerchief, wiped the tears from its eyes, and kissed it; then, returning the chain to the porter, she desired him to lead that back from whence he had taken it, and bring her the other.

The porter carried the one that had been beaten back to the closet, and, in returning, took the other from the hands of Aminè, and presented it to Zobeidè, who was waiting for it. "Hold it as you did the first," said she; then, taking the whip, she served this in the same manner. She then wept with it, dried its tears, kissed it, and returned it to the porter, who was saved the trouble of carrying it back to the closet by the agreeable Aminè, who took it herself.

The three calenders, as well as the caliph and his party, were much astonished at this ceremony. They could not comprehend why Zobeidè, after having whipped with so much violence the two dogs, which, according to the tenets of the Mussulman religion, are impure animals, should afterwards weep with them, kiss them, and dry their tears. They conversed together about it, and the caliph in particular was very desirous of knowing the reason of an action which appeared to him so singular. He made signs to the vizier to inquire, but he turned his head another way, till at last, importuned by repeated signs, he answered in the same manner, that it was not yet time to satisfy his curiosity.

Zobeidè remained for some time in the middle of the room, as if to rest from her fatigue in beating the two dogs. "My dear sister," said the beautiful Safiè, "will you not return to your place, that I may also perform my part?" "Yes," replied Zobeidè, and seated herself on the sofa, with the caliph, Giafar, and Mesroure on her right hand, and the three calenders and the porter on her left.

The company continued for some time silent; at length Safiè, who had placed herself on the seat in the middle of the room, said to Aminè, "Sister, get up; you understand what I mean." Aminè rose, and went into a different closet from that whence the dogs were brought; she returned with a case, covered with yellow satin, and richly ornamented with an embroidery of green and gold. She opened it, and took out a lute, which she presented to her sister. Safiè took it, and after having tuned it, began to accompany it with her voice; she sung an air, on the torments of absence, in so agreeable a style that the caliph and the rest of the company were enchanted. When she had finished, as she had sung with a great deal of action as well as passion, she offered the lute to Aminè, saying, "Sister, my voice fails me; do you take it, and oblige the company by playing and singing instead of me."

Aminè, having played a little prelude, to hear if the instrument was in tune, sung for some time on the same subject; but she became so affected by the words she uttered, that she had not power to finish the air. Zobeidè began to praise her sister: "You have done wonders," said she; "it is easy to perceive that you feel the griefs you express." Aminè had not time to reply to this speech; she felt herself so oppressed at that moment that she could think of nothing but giving herself air, and opening her robe, she exposed a bosom, not white, as the beautiful Aminè ought to have had, but so covered with scars as

to create a species of horror in the spectators. This, however, gave her no relief, and she fainted away.

Whilst Zobeidè and Safiè ran to assist their sister, one of the calenders exclaimed, "We had better have slept in the open air than come here to witness such a spectacle."

The caliph, who heard him, drew near, and inquired what all this meant. "We know no more than you," replied the calender. "What," resumed the caliph, "do not you belong to the house? Cannot you inform me about these two black dogs, and this lady, who appears to have been so ill-treated?" "Sir," said the calender, "we never were in this house before now, and entered it only a few minutes sooner than you did." This increased the astonishment of the caliph. "Perhaps," said he, "the man who is with you can give you some information." The calender made signs to the porter to draw near, and asked him if he knew why the black dogs had been beaten, and why the bosom of Aminè was so scarred. "Sir," replied the porter, "I swear by the great living God, that if you know nothing of the matter, we are all equally ignorant. It is true that I live in this city; but before to-day I never entered this house; and if you are surprised to see me here, I am not less so at being in such company. What increases my surprise," added he, "is not to see any man with these ladies."

The caliph and his party, as well as the calenders, thought that the porter belonged to the family, and that he would have been able to have informed them of what they wished so much to know. The caliph, whatever might be the consequence, resolved to satisfy his curiosity. "Attend to me," he said to the rest; "we are seven men, and there are only three women; let us, then, compel them to give us the information we request, and if they refuse to comply with a good grace, we can force them to it." The grand vizier, Giagar, opposed this plan, and explained the consequences of it to the caliph, without discovering to the calenders who he was, as he always addressed him like a merchant. "Consider, sir, I beg," said he, "that we have our reputation to preserve. You know on what condition these ladies suffered us to become their guests, and we accepted the terms. What will they say to us if we infringe the compact? And we should be still more to blame if any misfortune should happen to us in consequence of it. It is not to be supposed that they would require such a promise from us, unless they should be able to make us repent if we broke it."

The vizier now drew the caliph a little aside, and spoke to him in a low voice: "The night, my lord, will not last long, if your majesty will but have a little patience; I will then come and bring these women before you, when on your throne, and you may learn from them whatever you wish." Although this advice was very judicious, the caliph rejected it, and desired the vizier to be silent, and said he would not wait so long, but would that instant have the information he wished. The next question was, who should first make the inquiry. The caliph endeavoured to persuade the calenders to speak first, but they excused themselves. At last they all agreed that it should be the porter. He was preparing to utter the fatal question, when Zobeidè, after having assisted Aminè, who had recovered from her fainting, approached them. As she had heard them speak in rather a loud and warm manner, she said to them, "What are you talking of?—what is your contest about?"

The porter then addressed her as follows:—"These gentlemen, madam, entreat you to have the goodness to explain to them why you wept with those dogs, after having treated them so ill; and how it has happened that the lady who fainted has her bosom covered with scars. This, madam, is what I have been required by them to ask of you."

At these words Zobeidè, in the most haughty and fierce manner, turned to the caliph and the calenders. "Is it true, gentlemen," she asked, "that you have commissioned this man to require this information of me?" They all answered it was, except the vizier Giafar, who did not open his lips. Upon this she replied to them in a tone, which showed how much she was offended, "Because we granted you the favour you requested of us, and in order to prevent any cause of discontent, or dissatisfaction on your parts, as we were alone, we made our acquiescence subject to one positive condition; that you should not speak about what did not concern you, lest you should hear what would not please you—after having both received and entertained you as well as we possibly could, you do not scruple to break your word. This probably arises from the facility with which we agreed to receive you; but that surely is no excuse; and your conduct, therefore, cannot be considered as honourable." Having concluded her speech, she struck the floor with her foot, and clapped her hands three times, and called out, "Enter quickly!" A door immediately opened, and seven strong powerful black slaves rushed in, with scimitars in their hand, and each seized one of the company. They threw them to the ground, drew them into the middle of the hall, and were preparing to take off their heads.

We may easily conceive what was the alarm of the caliph. He repented, but too late, at not having followed the advice of his vizier. In the mean time this unfortunate prince, Giafar, Mesrour, the porter, and three calenders, were about to pay with their lives for their indiscreet curiosity; but before they received the fatal stroke, one of the slaves said to Zobeidè and her sisters, "High, powerful, and respected mistresses, do you command us to cut their throats?" "Stop," answered Zobeidè, "it is necessary first to interrogate them." "Madam," cried the affrighted porter, "in the name of God do not make me die for the crime of another. I am innocent, and they only are guilty. Alas!" he continued, weeping, "we were passing the time so agreeably. These one-eyed calenders are the cause of this misfortune; there is not even a city that would not be ruined by men of such ill-favoured countenances. I entreat you, madam, not to confound the first with the last, and remember, it is much more commendable to pardon a miserable wretch like me, deprived of all assistance, than to overwhelm him with your power, and sacrifice him to your resentment."

Zobeidè, in spite of her anger, could not help laughing inwardly at the lamentations of the porter. But without paying any attention to him, she addressed herself again to the others. "Answer me," said she, "and tell me who you are, if not, you have only an instant to live. I cannot believe that you are honourable men, or persons of authority or distinction in whatever country you call your own. If that had been the case, you would have paid more attention and more respect to us."

The caliph, being naturally impatient, suffered infinitely more than the rest, at finding his life depending upon the commands of an offended and justly irritated woman; but he began to conceive there were some hopes when he found that she wished to know who they all were, as he imagined she would by no means take away his life, when she should be informed of his rank. It was for this reason that he whispered to his vizier, who was near him, instantly to declare who he was. But this wise and prudent minister, wishing to preserve the honour of his master, and being unwilling to make public the great affront he had brought upon himself, answered, "We suffer only what we deserve." When, however, in obedience to the caliph, he wished to speak, Zobeidè would not give them time. She immediately addressed herself to the three calenders, and observing that they were all three blind with one eye, she asked if they were brothers. "No, madam," answered one of them for the rest, "we are not brothers by blood, but only in consequence of being calenders; that is, in

pursuing and observing the same kind of life." "Have you," said she, speaking to one of them in particular, "lost the sight of one eye from your birth?" "No, indeed, madam," he answered; "I became so through a most surprising adventure, by the recital or perusal of which, were it written, every one must derive advantage. After this misfortune, I shaved my beard and eyebrows, and in taking up the habit I wear, became a calender.

Zobeidè put the same question to the others, who returned her the same answer as the first. But the last who spoke, added, "To inform you, madam, that we are not common persons, and in order that you should have some pity for us, we must tell you, that we are all the sons of kings. Although we have never seen each other before this evening, we have had sufficient time to become acquainted with this circumstance; and I can assure you that the kings, who have given us birth, have made some noise in the world!"

During this speech Zobeidè became less angry, and told the slaves to set them at liberty, but at the same time to remain where they were. "They," said she, "who shall recount their history to me, and explain the motives which brought them to this house, shall suffer no harm, but shall have permission to go where they please; but such as shall refuse to give us that satisfaction shall not be spared." The three calenders, the caliph, the grand vizier Giafar, the eunuch Mesrour, and the porter, were all on the carpet in the middle of the hall before the three ladies, who sat on a sofa, with the slaves behind them, ready to execute any orders they might receive.

The porter, understanding that he had only to relate his history in order to be delivered from so great a danger, spoke first. "You are already acquainted, madam," he said, "with my history, and what brought me to your house. What I have to relate, therefore, will soon be finished. Your sister engaged me this morning at the place where I take my stand in quality of a porter, by which I endeavour to gain a living. I followed her to a wine merchant's, to an herb-seller's, to an orange merchant's, and to those who sell almonds, nuts, and other dried fruits. We then went to a confectioner's, and to a druggist's, from thence with my basket on my head, as full as it well could be, I came here, where you had the goodness to suffer me to remain till now, a favour I shall never forget. This is the whole of my history."

When the porter had concluded, Zobeidè, very well satisfied with him, said, "Save thyself and begone, nor ever let us see thee again." "I beg of you, madam," replied he, "to let me remain a little longer. It would be unfair that I should not hear their histories, after they have had the pleasure of hearing mine." In saying this he took his place at the end of the sofa, truly delighted at finding himself free from the danger which so much alarmed him. One of the calenders next spoke, and addressing himself to Zobeidè as the principal person, who had commanded them to give an account of themselves, began his history as follows.

THE HISTORY OF THE FIRST CALENDER, THE SON OF A KING.

IN order to inform you, madam, how I lost my right eye, and the reason that I have been obliged to take the habit of a calender, I must begin by telling you that I am the son of a king. My father had a brother who, like himself, was a monarch over a neighbouring state. This brother had two children, a son and a daughter, the former of whom was near my age.

When I had gone through all my exercises, and the king, my father, thought fit to allow me a certain degree of liberty, I went regularly every year to see

my uncle, and passed a month or two at his court, after which I returned home. These visits produced between the prince, my cousin, and myself, the most intimate friendship. The last time I saw him, he received me with the demonstration of the greatest joy and tenderness, more so indeed than ever; and wishing one day to amuse me by some great entertainment, he made extraordinary preparations for it. We remained a long time at table, and after we had both supped, "You can never my cousin," he said to me, "possibly imagine what has occupied my thoughts, since your last journey. Since you were here last, I have employed a great number of workmen about the design I meditated. I have erected a building, which is just finished, and we shall soon be able to lodge there: you will not be sorry to see it, but you must first take an oath that you will be both secret and faithful; these two things I must require of you."

The friendship and familiarity in which we lived, did not permit me to refuse him anything; I took, therefore, without hesitation, the oath he required. "Wait for me in this place," he cried, "and I will be with you in a moment." He did not, in fact, detain me long, but returned with a female in his hand, of very great beauty, and most magnificently dressed.

He did not say who she was, nor did I think it right to inquire. We again sat down to the table with the lady, and remained there some time, talking of different things, and drinking bumpers to each other's health. The prince then said to me, "We have no time to lose; oblige me by taking this lady with you, and conduct her by such a way to a place, where you will see a tomb, newly erected, in the shape of a dome. You will easily know it, as the door is open. Enter there together, and wait for me; I will return directly."

Faithful to my oath, I did not wish to know more. I presented my hand to the lady, and following the instructions, which the prince, my cousin, had given me, I conducted her safely, by the light of the moon, without any mistake. We had scarcely got to the tomb, when we saw the prince, who had followed us, with a small vessel full of water, a hoe or spade, and a small sack, in which there was some lime, or mortar. The spade served him to destroy the empty sepulchre, which was in the middle of the tomb; he took the stones away, one by one, and placed them in one corner. When he had taken them all away, he made a hole in the ground, and I perceived a trap-door under the sepulchre. He lifted it up, and discovered the beginning of a winding staircase. My cousin, then addressing himself to the lady, said, "This is the way, madam, that leads to the place I have mentioned to you." At these words the lady approached and descended the stairs. The prince was just going to follow her, but first turning to me, "I am infinitely obliged to you, my cousin," said he, "for the trouble you have had; receive my best thanks for it, and farewell. "My dear cousin," I cried, "what does all this mean?" "That is of no consequence," he answered; "you may return by the same way you came."

I was unable to learn anything more from him, and was obliged to take my leave of him. In returning to my uncle's palace, the vapour of the wine I had before drunk began to affect my head. I nevertheless reached my apartment, and retired to rest. On waking the next morning, I made many reflections on the occurrences of the night before, and recalled all the circumstances of so singular an adventure to my recollection. The whole appeared to me to be a dream. I was so much persuaded of it, that I sent to know if the prince, my cousin, was yet dressed. But when they brought me word that he had not slept at home, nor did they know what was become of him, and were very much distressed at it, I concluded that the strange adventure of the tomb was too true. This afflicted me very much, and keeping myself in private, I went secretly to the public cemetery, or burial-place, where there were a great many

tombs similar to that which I had before seen. I passed the day in examining them all, but was unable to discover the one I searched for. I spent four days in the same useless pursuit.

It is necessary for me to inform you, that the king, my uncle, was absent during the whole of this time. He had been for some time on a hunting party. I was very unwilling to wait for his coming back, and having requested his ministers to make my excuses for going, I set out on my return to my father's court, from which I was not accustomed to make so long a stay. I left my uncle's ministers very much distressed at not being able to discover what was become of the prince; but as I could not violate the oath I had taken to keep the secret, I dared not lessen their anxiety by informing them of any part of what I knew.

I arrived at the capital of my father, and, contrary to the usual custom, I discovered at the gate of the palace a large guard, by whom I was immediately surrounded. I demanded the reason of this, when an officer answered, "The army, prince, has acknowledged the grand vizier as king in the room of your father who is dead, and I arrest you as prisoner on behalf the new king." At these words the guards seized me, and conducted me before the tyrant. Judge, madam, what was my surprise and grief.

This rebellious vizier had conceived a strong hatred against me, which he had for a long time cherished. The cause of it was as follows. When I was very young I was fond of shooting with a cross-bow. One day I took one to the top of the palace, and amused myself with it on the terrace. A bird happened to fly before me; I shot at it but missed: and the arrow by chance struck the vizier in the eye, and put it out, as he was taking the air on the terrace of his own house. As soon as I was informed of this accident, I went and made my apologies to him in person. He did not, however, fail to preserve a strong resentment against me, of which he gave every proof he could when any opportunity occurred. When he now found me in his power, he evinced it in the most barbarous manner. As soon as he saw me he ran towards me in the utmost rage, and digging his fingers into my right eye he tore it himself from the socket. It was in this way that I became blind.

But the usurper did not confine his cruelty to this action alone. He ordered me to be imprisoned in a sort of cage, and to be carried in this manner to some distant place, where the executioner, after cutting off my head, was to leave my body exposed to the birds of prey. The executioner mounted his horse, accompanied by another man, and carried me with him. He did not stop till he came to a place proper for the execution of his order. I made, however, so good a use of entreaties, prayers, and tears, that I excited his compassion. "Go," said he to me, "depart instantly out of the kingdom, and take care never to return; if you do you will only encounter certain destruction, and will be the cause of mine." I thanked him for the favour he did me, and I was no sooner alone than I consoled myself for the loss of my eye, by reflecting that I had just escaped from a greater misfortune.

In the state in which I was I could not get on very fast. During the day I concealed myself in unfrequented and secret places, and travelled by night as far as my strength would permit me. At length I arrived in the country belonging to the king, my uncle, and I proceeded directly to the capital.

I gave a long detail of the dreadful cause of my return, and of the miserable state in which he saw me. "Alas!" cried he, "was it not sufficient to lose my son; but must I now learn the death of a brother, whom I dearly loved, and find you in the deplorable state to which you are reduced?" He informed me of the distress he had suffered from not being able to learn any tidings of his son, in spite of all the inquiries he had made, and all the diligence he had

used. The tears ran from the eyes of this unfortunate father in giving me this account, and he appeared to me so much afflicted that I could not resist his grief, nor could I keep the oath I had pledged to my cousin. I then related to the king everything that had formerly passed.

He listened to me with some sort of consolation, and when I had finished, he said, "The recital, my dear nephew, you have given me affords me some little hope. I well know that my son built such a tomb, and I know very nearly on what spot. With the recollection, also, which you may have, I flatter myself we may discover it. But since he has done all this so secretly, and required you also to keep it unknown, I am of opinion that we two only should make the search, in order to avoid its being generally known and talked of." He had also another reason, which he did not inform me of, for wishing to keep this a secret. The reason, as the conclusion of my history will show, was a very important one.

We each of us disguised ourselves, and went out by a garden gate which opened into the fields. We were fortunate enough very soon to discover the object of our search. I immediately recognised the tomb, at which I was the more rejoiced as I had before searched for it so long to no purpose. We entered and found the iron trap-door shut down upon the opening to the stairs. We had great difficulty in lifting it up, because the prince had cemented it down with the lime and the water, which I mentioned his having carried: at last, however, we got it up. My uncle was the first who descended, and I followed. We went down about fifty steps, when we found ourselves at the bottom of the stairs in a sort of ante-room, which was full of a thick smoke, very unpleasant to the smell, and which obscured the light thrown from a very brilliant lustre.

From this antechamber we passed on to one much larger, the roof of which was supported by large columns, and illuminated by many lustres. In the middle there was a cistern, and on each side we observed various sorts of provisions. We were much surprised at not seeing any one. Opposite to us there was a raised sofa, to which they ascended by some steps, and beyond this there appeared a very large bed, the curtains of which were drawn. The king went up, and undrawing them, discovered the prince, his son, and the lady in bed together, but burnt and changed into a coal, as if they had been thrown on to an immense fire, and had been taken off before they were consumed. What surprised me even more than this sight itself was, that my uncle did not evince any sorrow or regret at seeing his son in this horrid state. He spit in his face, and said in an enraged manner, "See what is the punishment of this world, but that of the next will be eternal." Not satisfied with saying this, he pulled off his slipper and gave his lifeless son a great blow on his cheek.

I cannot express the astonishment I felt at seeing the king, my uncle, treat his son in that manner after his death. "Sire," said I to him, "however violent my grief may be at seeing so heartrending an object, yet I cannot yield to it without first inquiring of your majesty, what crime the prince, my cousin, can have committed, that his remains should deserve such treatment." The king thus replied: "Nephew, I must inform you that my son, unworthy such a title, loved his sister from his earliest years, and was equally beloved by her. I rather encouraged their rising friendship, because I did not foresee the danger that was to ensue. And who could have foreseen it? This affection increased with their years, and reached to such a pitch that I dreaded the consequences. I applied the only remedy then in my power, I severely reprimanded my son for his conduct, and represented to him the horrors that would arise if he persisted in it, and the eternal shame that would tarnish our family if he indulged himself in so criminal a passion.

"I talked to his sister in the same terms, and confined her that she might have no further communication with her brother. But the unhappy girl had tasted of the poison, and all the obstacles that my prudence suggested only irritated her passion.

"My son, well persuaded that his sister continued to love him, prepared this subterraneous asylum, under pretence of building a tomb, hoping some day to find an opportunity of getting access to the object of his unholy passion, and concealing her in this place. He chose the moment of my absence to force the retreat of his sister, which is a circumstance that my honour will not allow me to publish. After this criminal deed he shut himself up with her in this building, which he furnished, as you perceive, with all sorts of provisions, to be able to enjoy for a length of time his detestable amours, which must create horror in all who hear of them. But God would not suffer such an abominable crime, and has justly punished each of them." He wept bitterly on finishing these words, and I mingled my tears with his.

Some time after he cast his eyes on me: "But, my dear nephew," resumed he, embracing me, "if I have lost an unworthy son, I may find in you a happy reparation of my loss." The reflections which arose on the untimely end of the prince, and the princess, his daughter, again drew tears from us both.

We ascended the same staircase and quitted this dismal abode. We put the iron trap-door in its place, and covered it with earth and the rubbish of the building, to conceal, as much as possible, so dreadful an example of the wrath of God.

We returned to the palace before our absence had been observed, and shortly after we heard a confused noise of trumpets, cymbals, drums, and other warlike instruments. A thick dust, which obscured the air, soon informed us what it was, and announced the arrival of a formidable army. It was the same vizier who had dethroned my father, and taken possession of his dominions, and who came now with a large number of troops to seize those of my uncle.

This prince, who had only his usual guard, could not resist so many enemies. They invested the city, and as the gates were opened to them without resistance, they soon took possession of it. They had not much difficulty to penetrate to the palace of the king, who attempted to defend himself, but he was killed, after having dearly sold his life. On my part, I fought for some time, but seeing that I must surrender if I continued, I retired, and had the good fortune to escape, and take refuge in the house of an officer of the king, on whose fidelity I could depend.

Overcome with grief, and persecuted by fortune, I had recourse to a stratagem, which was the last resource to preserve my life. I shaved my beard and my eyebrows, and put on the habit of a calender, under which disguise I left the city without being recognised. After that it was no difficult matter to quit the dominions of the king, my uncle, by unfrequented roads. I avoided the towns till I arrived in the empire of the powerful sovereign of all believers, the glorious and renowned caliph Haroun Alraschid, when I ceased to fear. I considered what was my best plan, and I resolved to come to Bagdad and throw myself at the feet of this great monarch, whose generosity is everywhere admired. I shall obtain compassion, thought I, by the recital of a history so surprising as mine; he will no doubt commiserate the fate of an unhappy prince, and I shall not implore his assistance in vain.

At length, after a journey of several months, I arrived to-day at the gates of the city; when the evening came on I entered, and having rested a little time to recover my spirits, and deliberate which way I should turn my steps, this other calender, who is next to me, arrived also. He saluted me, and I returned the compliment: "You appear," said I, "a stranger like myself."

"You are not mistaken," returned he. At the very moment he made this reply, the third calender, whom you see, came towards us. He saluted us, and acquainted us that he, too, was a stranger, and just arrived at Bagdad. Like brothers we united together, and resolved never to separate.

But it was late, and we did not know where to go for a lodging, in a city where we never had been before. Our good fortune, however, having conducted us to your door, we took the liberty of knocking; you have received us with so much benevolence and charity that we cannot sufficiently thank you. This, madam, is what you desired me to relate; this was the way in which I lost my right eye; this was the reason I have my beard and eyebrows shaved, and why I am at this moment in your company.

"Enough," said Zobeidè; "we thank you, and you may retire whenever you please." The calender excused himself, and entreated the lady to allow him to stay and hear the history of his two companions, whom he could not well abandon, as well as that of the three other persons of the party.

The history of the first calender appeared very surprising to the whole company, and particularly to the caliph. The presence of the slaves, armed with their scimitars, did not prevent him from saying in a whisper to the vizier, "As long as I can remember, I never heard anything to compare with this history of the calender, though I have been all my life in the habit of hearing similar narratives." He had no sooner finished than the second calender began, and addressing himself to Zobeidè, spoke as follows.

THE HISTORY OF THE SECOND CALENDER, THE SON OF A KING.

To obey your commands, madam, and to inform you by what strange adventure I lost my right eye, is to give you an account of my whole life.

I was scarcely more than an infant when the king, my father (for I too am a prince by birth), observing that I possessed great quickness of intellect, spared no pains in its cultivation. He collected from every part of his dominions, whoever was famous for science, and a knowledge of the fine arts, for the purpose of instructing me. I no sooner knew how to read and write, than I learnt by heart the whole of the Koran, that admirable book, in which we find the basis, precepts, and regulations of our religion. That my knowledge might not be shallow and superficial, I perused the works of the most approved authors, who have written on the same subject, and both explained and illustrated that book by their commentaries. To this study I added an acquaintance with all the traditions, received from the mouth of our prophet, by those illustrious men, who were his contemporaries. Not satisfied with possessing a deep and extensive knowledge of our religion, I made also a particular study of our histories, and became master of polite literature, of poetry and versification. I then applied myself to geography and chronology, and became anxious to attain a knowledge of our own language in its greatest purity; and all this without neglecting those exercises which are so suited to a prince. There was, however, one thing in which I most delighted, and at length excelled, and that was in forming the characters of our Arabic language; and I surpassed all the writing masters of our kingdom, who had acquired the greatest reputation.

Fame bestowed upon me even more honour than I deserved. She was not satisfied with spreading a report of my talents throughout the dominions of the king my father, but even carried the account of them to the court of the Indies,

whose powerful monarch became so curious to see me, that he sent an ambassador accompanied with the richest presents to my father, to request me of him. This embassy, for many reasons, delighted him. He was persuaded that it was the best possible thing for a prince of my age to travel to foreign courts; and he was also very well satisfied at forming a friendship with the sultan of India. I set out with the ambassador, but with very few attendants, and little baggage, on account of the length and difficulties of the way.

We had been about a month on our journey when we saw in the distance an immense cloud of dust, and soon after we discovered fifty horsemen, well armed. They were robbers, who approached us at full speed. As we had ten horses laden with our baggage, and the presents, which I was to make to the sultan, in my father's name, and as our party consisted but of very few, you may easily imagine that the robbers attacked us without hesitation. Not being able to repel force by force, we told them we were the ambassadors of the sultan of India, and we hoped they would do nothing contrary to the respect they owed to him. By this we thought we should preserve both our equipage and our lives; but the robbers insolently answered, "Why do you wish us to respect the sultan your master? We are not his subjects, nor even within his realm." Having said this, they immediately surrounded and attacked us on all sides. I defended myself as long as I could, but finding that I was wounded, and seeing the ambassador and all our attendants overthrown, I took advantage of the remaining strength of my horse, who was also wounded, and escaped from them. I pushed him on as far as he would carry me, he then suddenly fell under my weight, quite dead from fatigue, and the blood he had lost. I disentangled myself as fast as possible, and observing that no one pursued me, I supposed the robbers did not choose to neglect the plunder they had acquired.

Imagine me then, madam, alone, wounded, destitute of every help, and in a country where I was an entire stranger. I was afraid of regaining the great road, from the dread of falling once more into the hands of the robbers. After having bound up my wound, which was not dangerous, I walked on the rest of the day, and in the evening I arrived at the foot of a mountain, on one side of which I discovered a sort of cave. I went in, and passed the night without any disturbance, after having eaten some fruits, which I had gathered as I came along.

For some days following I continued my journey without meeting with any place where I could rest; but at the end of about a month I arrived at a very large city, well inhabited, and most delightfully and advantageously situated, as several rivers flowed round it, and caused a perpetual spring. The number of agreeable objects which presented themselves to my eyes, excited so great a joy, that it suspended for a moment the poignant regret I felt at finding myself in such a miserable situation. My whole face, as well as my hands and feet, were of a brown tawny colour, for the sun had quite burnt me; and my slippers were so completely worn out by walking, that I was obliged to travel barefoot; besides this, my clothes were all in rags.

I entered the town in order to learn the language spoken, and thence to find out where I was. I addressed myself to a tailor, who was at work in his shop. On account of my youth, and a certain manner about me, which intimated I was something better than I appeared, he made me sit down near him. He asked me who I was, where I came from, and what had brought me to that place. I concealed nothing from him, but informed him of every circumstance that had happened to me, and did not even hesitate at discovering my name. The tailor listened to me very attentively: but when I had finished my narration, instead of giving me any consolation, he augmented my troubles. "Take care," said he to me, "that you do not place the same confidence in

any one else that you have in me, for the prince who reigns in this kingdom is the greatest enemy of the king, your father; and if he should be informed of your arrival in this city, I doubt not but he will inflict some evil upon you." I readily believed the sincerity of the tailor, when he told me the name of the prince; but as the enmity between my father and him has no connexion with my adventures, I shall not, madam, enter into any detail of it.

I thanked the tailor for the advice he had given me, and told him that I placed implicit faith in his good counsel, and should never forget the favour I received from him. As he supposed I was not deficient in appetite, he brought me something to eat, and offered me even an apartment at his house, which I accepted.

Some days after my arrival, the tailor, remarking that I was tolerably recovered from the effects of my long and painful journey, and being aware that most of the princes of our religion had the precaution, in order to guard against any reverse of fortune, to make themselves acquainted with some art or trade, to assist them in case of want, asked me if I knew anything by which I could acquire a livelihood, without being chargeable to anybody. I told him that I was well versed in the science of laws, both human and divine, that I was a grammarian, a poet, and, above all, that I wrote remarkably well. "With all this," he replied, "you will not in this country procure a morsel of bread; nothing is more useless here than this kind of knowledge. If you wish to follow my advice," he added, "you will procure a short jacket, and as you are strong and of a good constitution, you may go into the neighbouring forest, and cut wood for fuel. You may then go and expose it for sale in the market; and I assure you that you may acquire a small income, but sufficient to enable you to live independently of every one. By these means, you will be enabled to wait till heaven shall become favourable to you; and till the cloud of bad fortune, which hangs over you, and obliges you to conceal your birth, shall have blown over. I will furnish you with a cord and hatchet."

The fear of being known, and the necessity of supporting myself, determined me to pursue this plan, in spite of the degradation and pain which were attached to it.

The next day the tailor brought me a hatchet and a cord, and also a short jacket, and recommending me to some poor people who obtained their livelihood in the same manner, he requested them to take me with them. They conducted me to the forest, and from this time I regularly brought back upon my head a large bundle of wood, which I sold for a small piece of gold money, current in that country; for although the forest was not far off, wood was nevertheless dear in that city, because there were few men who gave themselves the trouble of going to cut it. I soon acquired a considerable sum, and was enabled to repay the tailor what he had expended on my account.

I had passed more than a year in this mode of life, when having one day gone deeper into the forest than usual, I came to a very pleasant spot, where I began to cut my wood. In cutting up the root of a tree, I discovered an iron ring fastened to a trap-door of the same material. I immediately cleared away the earth that covered it, and on lifting it up, I perceived a staircase, by which I descended, with my hatchet in my hand. When I got to the bottom of the stairs, I found myself in a vast palace, which struck me very much by the great brilliancy with which it was illuminated, as much so indeed as if it had been built on the most open spot above ground. I went forward along a gallery supported on columns of jasper, the bases and capitals of which were of massive gold, but stopped suddenly on beholding a lady, who appeared to have so noble and graceful an air, and to possess such extraordinary beauty, that my attention was taken off from every other object, and my eyes fixed on her alone.

To prevent this beautiful lady from having the trouble of coming to me, I made haste towards her; and while I was making a most respectful reverence, she said to me, "Who are you, a man or a Genius?" "I am a man, madam," I answered, getting up, "nor have I any commerce with Genii." "By what adventure," replied she, with a deep sigh, "have you come here? I have remained here more than twenty-five years, and during the whole of that time I have seen no other man than yourself."

Her great beauty, which had already made a deep impression on me, together with the mildness and good humour with which she received me, made me bold enough to say, "Before, madam, I have the honour of satisfying your curiosity, permit me to tell you, that I feel highly delighted at this unexpected interview, which offers me the means, both of consoling myself under the affliction in which I am, and perhaps of making you happier than you now are." I then faithfully related to her by what strange accident she saw in me the son of a king, why I appeared to her in that condition, and how accident had discovered to me the entrance into the magnificent prison in which I found her; and of which from all appearance she was heartily tired. "Alas, prince," she replied, again sighing, "you may truly say this rich and superb prison is unpleasing and wearisome. The most enchanting spots cannot afford delight when we are there against our wills. Is it possible you have never heard any one speak of the great Epitimarus, king of the Ebony Isle, a place so called from the great quantity of that precious wood which it produces? I am the princess, his daughter."

"The king, my father, had chosen for my husband a prince, who was my cousin; but on the very night of our nuptials, in the midst of the rejoicings of the court and capital of the Isle of Ebony, and before I had been given to my husband, a Genius took me away. I fainted almost the same moment, and lost all recollection, and when I recovered my senses, I found myself in this place. For a long time I was inconsolable; but habit and necessity have reconciled me to the sight and company of the Genius. Twenty-five years have passed, as I have already told you, since I first was brought to this place, in which I must own that I have, even by wishing, not only everything necessary for life, but whatever can satisfy a princess who is fond of decoration and dress."

"Every ten days," continued the princess, "the Genius comes and passes the night here; he never sleeps here oftener, and gives as a reason that he is married to another, who would be jealous of the infidelity of which he was guilty, should it come to her knowledge. In the mean time, if I have any occasion for him, I have only to touch a talisman, which is placed at the entrance of my chamber, and he appears. It is now four days since he was here, and I have therefore to wait six days more before he again makes his appearance. You therefore may remain five with me, if it be agreeable to you, in order to keep me company; and I will endeavour to regale and entertain you equal to your merit and quality."

I should have thought myself too happy to obtain so great a favour by asking it, not to accept it after so obliging an offer. The princess then conducted me to a bath, the most elegant, convenient, and at the same time sumptuous you can possibly imagine. When I came out, I found instead of my own dress, another very rich one, which I put on, less for its magnificence than to render myself more worthy of her notice.

We seated ourselves on a sofa, covered with superb drapery; the cushions of which were of the richest Indian brocade; she then set before me a variety of the most delicate and rare dishes. We eat together, and having passed the remainder of the day very agreeably, she received me at night in her chamber.

The next day, in order to devise every method of entertaining me, she pro-

duced, at dinner, a flask of very old wine, the finest I ever tasted; and to please me, she drank several glasses with me. I no sooner found my head rather heated with this agreeable liquor, than I said, "Beautiful princess, you have been buried here alive much too long; follow me, and go and enjoy the brightness of the genuine day, of which for so many years you have been deprived. Abandon this false though brilliant light you have here." "Let us talk no more, prince," she answered, smiling, "on this subject. I value not the most beautiful day in the world, if you will pass nine with me here, and give up the tenth to the Genius." "Princess," I replied, "I see very well that it is the dread you have of the Genius which makes you hold this language. As for myself, I fear him so little, that I am determined to break his talisman in pieces, with the magic spell that is inscribed upon it. Let him then come; I will wait for him: and however brave, however formidable he may be, I will make him feel the weight of my arm. I have taken an oath to exterminate all the Genii in the world, and he shall be the first." The princess, who knew the consequence of this conduct, conjured me not to touch the talisman. "Alas!" she cried, "it will be the means of destroying both you and myself. I am better acquainted with the dispositions of Genii than you can be." The wine I had drunk prevented me from acknowledging the propriety of her reasons; I kicked down the talisman, and broke it in pieces.

This was no sooner done than the whole palace shook, as if ready to fall to atoms, accompanied with a most dreadful noise like thunder, and flashes of lightning, which heightened still more the intermediate gloom. This formidable adventure in a moment dissipated the fumes of the wine, and made me own, though too late, the fault I had committed. "Princess," I exclaimed, "what does all this mean?" Without thinking of her own misfortune, and alarmed only for me, she, in a fright, answered, "Alas, it is all over with you, unless you save yourself by flight."

I followed her advice; and my fear was so great, that I forgot my hatchet and my cord. I had hardly gained the staircase by which I descended, than the enchanted palace opened to afford a passage to the Genius. "What has happened to you, and why have you called me?" he demanded of the princess, in an angry tone. "A violent pain," replied the princess, "obliged me to search after the bottle which you see; I drank two or three glasses, and unfortunately making a false step I fell upon the talisman, which I thus broke. There is no other cause." At this answer the Genius, in the utmost rage, exclaimed: "You are both impudent and deceitful; how came this hatchet and this cord here then?" "I have never seen them," replied she, "till this instant. Perhaps, in the haste and impetuosity with which you came, you have taken them up in passing through some place, and have brought them here, without observing them."

The Genius replied only by reproaches and by blows, of which I could plainly distinguish the sound. It distressed me beyond measure to hear the cries and sobbing of the princess, who was thus cruelly used. I had already taken off the habit which she had made me put on, and resumed my own, which I had carried to the staircase the day before, after I had been in the bath. I proceeded therefore up the stairs, as I was the more penetrated with grief and compassion on account of having been the cause of such a misfortune: and as I should become the most criminal and ungrateful of men in thus sacrificing the most beautiful princess on earth to the barbarity of an implacable Genius. "It is true," said I to myself, "that she has been a prisoner for five and twenty years; but, excepting liberty, she had nothing to wish for, in order to be happy. My conduct has put an end to her happiness, and raised the cruelty of a merciless demon to its very summit. I then shut down the trap-door, covered it

over with the earth, and returned to the city with a load of wood, which I collected, without even knowing what I was about; so much was I absorbed and afflicted at what had happened.

My host, the tailor, expressed great joy at my return. "Your absence," said he, "has caused me much uneasiness on account of the secret of your birth, with which you have intrusted me. I knew not what to think, and began to fear some one might have recognised you. God be praised that you are come back. I thanked him much for his zeal and affection, but did not inform him of anything that had happened; nor of the reason why I returned without my hatchet and cord. I retired to my chamber, where I reproached myself a thousand times for my great imprudence. "Nothing," I cried, "could have equalled the mutual happiness of the princess and myself, if I had been satisfied, and had not broken the talisman."

While I was abandoning myself to these afflicting thoughts, the tailor entered my apartment, and said that an old man, whom he did not know, had brought my hatchet and cord, which he had found on his way. "He has been informed by your companions," added the tailor, "who went to cut wood with you, that you live here. Come and speak to him, as he wishes to deliver them into your own hands." At this speech I changed colour, and trembled from head to foot. The tailor inquired the cause, when suddenly the floor of my chamber opened. The old man, who had not the patience to wait, appeared, and presented himself to us with the hatchet and cord. This was in fact the Genius, who had ravished the beautiful princess of the Isle of Ebony, and who had thus come in disguise, after having treated her with the greatest barbarity. "I am a Genius," he said to us, "a son of the daughter of Eblis, prince of the Genii. Is not this thy hatchet?" added he, addressing me, "and is not this thy cord?"

The Genius gave me no time to answer these questions; nor indeed should I have been able to do so, as his dreadful presence made me entirely forget myself. He took me by the middle of my body, and dragging me out of the chamber, sprang into the air, and carried me up towards heaven with so much force and celerity, that I was sensible of the great height to which I had ascended, before I was aware of the distance I had travelled in so short a space of time. He then descended towards the earth; and having caused it to open, by striking his foot against it, he sank into it, and I instantly found myself in the enchanted palace, and in the presence of the beautiful princess of the Isle of Ebony. But alas! what a sight! It pierced my very inmost heart. She was naked and covered with blood, and lying along the ground more dead than alive, with her face bathed in tears.

"Perfidious wretch," said the Genius, showing me to her, "is not this thy lover?" She cast her languid eyes upon me, and in a sorrowful tone, answered, "I know him not, nor have I ever seen him till this instant." "What!" cried the Genius, "dare you affirm you do not know him, although he is the cause of your being treated, and justly, in the manner you have been?" "If I am ignorant of him," replied she, "do you wish I should utter a falsehood, which would prove his destruction?" "Well, then," exclaimed the Genius, drawing his scimitar, and presenting it to the princess, "if you have never seen him, take this scimitar and cut off his head." "How, alas!" she answered, "can I execute what you require of me? My strength is so exhausted, that I cannot lift up my arm; and even were I able, do you think I could put to death an innocent person, whom I do not know?" "This refusal, then," added the Genius, "completely proves to me your crime." And then turning to me, he said, "Are you too unacquainted with her?"

I should have been the most ungrateful and most perfidious of men, if I had not preserved the same fidelity towards her, which she had done for me; I

therefore said, "How should I know her, when this is the first time I have ever set eyes upon her?" "If that be true," he replied, "take the scimitar and cut off her head. It is the price I set on your liberty, and the only way to convince me you have never seen her before, as you affirm." "With all my heart," I answered, and took the scimitar in my hand. Do not, however, imagine that I approached the beautiful princess of the Isle of Ebony for the purpose of becoming the instrument of the barbarity of the Genius. I did it only to show her by my actions, as well as I could, that as she had the courage to sacrifice her life from love of me, neither could I refuse to immolate myself also from the same motive. The princess comprehended my meaning; and in spite of her pains and sufferings, gave me to understand by her looks, that she should willingly die, and was well satisfied with knowing that I was equally ready. I then drew back, and throwing the scimitar on the ground, said to the Genius, "I should be eternally condemned by all men if I had the cowardice to murder, I will not say a person whom I do not know, but a lady such as I now see, in the state in which she is, ready to expire. You may treat me as you please, since I am in your power, but I will never obey your barbarous commands."

"I am well aware," said the Genius, "that both of you brave my rage, and insult my jealousy: but you shall find what I am capable of by the manner in which I shall treat you." At these words, the monster took up the scimitar, and cut off one of the hands of the princess, who had barely time to bid me an eternal farewell with the other, before the great loss of blood from her other wounds, added to what flowed from the present, extinguished her life, not two moments after the perpetration of this last cruelty; the sight of which made me faint.

When I returned to my senses, I complained to the Genius for suffering me to remain in expectation of death. "Strike," I cried, "I am ready to receive the mortal wound, and expect it from you as the greatest favour you can bestow." Instead, however, of doing so, he said, "Observe in what manner Genii treat women, whom they suspect of infidelity. She received you here; and if I were convinced that she had done me any further wrong, I would this instant annihilate you; but I shall content myself with changing you into a dog, an ass, a lion, or a bird. Make your choice; I wish not to control you." These words gave me some hopes of softening him; I said, "Moderate, O powerful Genius, your wrath, and since you wish not to take my life, grant it me in a generous manner. If you pardon me, I shall always remember your clemency, as one of the best of men pardoned his neighbour, who bore him a most deadly envy." The Genius then asked me what had passed between these two neighbours, when I told him, if he would have the patience to listen to me, I would relate the history.

THE HISTORY OF THE ENVIOUS MAN, AND OF HIM WHO WAS ENVIED.

In a town of no inconsiderable importance, there were two men, who lived next door to each other. One of them was so excessively envious of the other, that the latter resolved to change his abode, and go and reside at some distance from him, supposing that nearness of residence alone was the cause of his neighbour's animosity; for although he was continually doing him some friendly office, he perceived that he was not the less hated. He therefore sold his house and the small estate he had there, and went to the capital of the kingdom, which was at no great distance, and bought a small piece of ground

about half a league from the town, on which there stood a very convenient house. He had also a good garden and a moderate court, in which there was a deep cistern, that was not now used.

The good man having made this purchase, put on the habit of a dervise, in order to pass his life more quietly, and made, also, many cells in his house, where he soon established a small community of dervises. The report of his virtue was soon more generally spread abroad, and failed not to attract the attention and visits of great numbers of the principal inhabitants as well as common people. At length he became honoured and noticed by almost every one. They came from a great distance to request him to offer up his prayers for them; and all who remained in retirement with him published an account of the blessings they thought they received from Heaven through his means.

The great reputation of this man at length reached the town from whence he came, and the envious man was so vexed that he left his house and all his affairs with the determination to go and destroy him. For this purpose he went to the convent of dervises, whose chief, his former neighbour, received him with every possible mark of friendship. The envious man told him that he was come for the express design of communicating an affair of great importance to him, and which he could only inform him of in private. "In short," said he, "in order that no one may hear us, let us, I beg of you, walk in your court: and when night comes on, order all the dervises to their cells." The chief of the dervises did as he requested.

When the envious man found himself alone with the good man, he began to relate to him whatever came into his thoughts, while they walked from one end of the court to the other, till observing they were just at the edge of the well, he gave him a push and threw him into it. No witness beheld this wicked deed, and he directly went away, reached the gate of the house, passed out unseen, and returned home well satisfied with his journey, highly pleased that the object of his envy was at length no more. In this, however, he was deceived.

Fortunately for the dervise, this well was inhabited by fairies and Genii, who were ready to assist him. They caught and supported him in their arms in such a way that he received not the least injury. He naturally supposed there was something very extraordinary in having had such a fall as ought to have cost him his life, and yet he could neither see nor perceive anything. He soon after, however, heard a voice say, "Do you know anything of this man to whom we have been so serviceable?" when some other voices answered, "No." The first then replied, "I will inform you. This man, with the most charitable and benevolent intentions in the world, left the town where he lived, and came to fix himself in this place with the hopes of being able to cure one of his neighbours of the envy and hatred he had conceived against him. He soon became so universally esteemed that the envious man could not endure it, and determined, therefore, to put an end to his existence. This design he would have executed had it not been for the assistance we afforded this good man, whose reputation is so great that the sultan, who resides in the neighbouring town, was coming to visit him to-morrow, in order to recommend the princess, his daughter, to his prayers."

Another voice then asked what occasion the princess had for the prayers of the dervise, to which the first answered: "Are you ignorant, then, that she is possessed by the power of the Genius Maimoun, the son of Dimdim, who has fallen in love with her? But I know how this good dervise can cure her. The thing is by no means difficult, as I will inform you. In his monastery there is a black cat, which has a white spot at the end of her tail, about the size of a small piece of money. Let him only pull out seven hairs from this white spot and burn them, and then with the smoke perfume the head of the

princess. From that moment she will be so thoroughly cured, and free from Maimoun, the son of Dimdim, that he will never again be able to come near her."

The chief of the dervises did not lose a single syllable of this conversation between the fairies and Genii, who from this time remained silent the whole night. The next morning, as soon as the day began to break, and different objects became discernible, the dervise perceived, as the wall was decayed in many places, a hole, by which he could get out without any difficulty.

The other dervises, who were seeking after him, were delighted at his appearance. He related to them, in a few words, the cunning wickedness of the guest he had entertained the day before, and then retired to his cell. It was not long before the black cat, which had been mentioned in the discourse of the fairies and Genii, came to him to be taken notice of as usual. He then took it up, and plucked out seven hairs from the white spot in its tail, and put them aside, in order to make use of whenever he should have occasion for them."

The sun had not long risen above the horizon when the sultan, who wished to neglect nothing from which he thought there was any chance of curing the princess, arrived at the gate. He ordered his guards to stop, and went in with the principal officers who accompanied him. The dervises received him with the greatest respect. The sultan directly took the chief aside, and said to him, "Worthy sheikh, you are perhaps already acquainted with the cause of my visit."—"If, sire," the dervise modestly answered, "I do not deceive myself, it is the malady of the princess that has been the occasion of my seeing you, an honour of which I am unworthy."—"It is so," replied the sultan; "and you will restore almost my life to me if, by means of your prayers, I shall obtain the re-establishment of my daughter's health."—"If your majesty," answered the worthy man, "will have the goodness to suffer her to come here, I flatter myself that, with the help and favour of God, she shall return in perfect health."

The prince, transported with joy, immediately sent for his daughter, who soon appeared, accompanied by a numerous train of females and eunuchs, and veiled in such a manner that her face could not be seen. The chief of the dervises made them hold a shovel over the head of the princess, and he no sooner threw the seven white hairs upon some burning coals, which he had ordered to be brought in it, then the Genius Maimoun, the son of Dimdim, uttered a violent scream, and left the princess quite at liberty. In the mean time nothing at all could be seen. The first thing she did was to put her hand to the veil which covered her face, and lift it up to see where she was. "Where am I?" she cried; "who has brought me here?" At these words the sultan could not conceal his joy; he embraced his daughter, he kissed her eyes, and then took the hand of the dervise and kissed that. "Give me," said he to his officers, "your opinion; what return does he deserve, who has cured my daughter." They all answered that he was worthy of her hand. "This is the very thing I was meditating," he cried, "and from this moment I claim him for my son-in-law."

Soon after this the first vizier died, and the sultan immediately advanced the dervise to the situation. The sultan himself afterwards dying without any male issue, this excellent man was proclaimed sultan by the general voice of the different religious and military orders.

The good dervise, being thus raised to the throne of his father-in-law, observed one day, as he was walking with his courtiers, the envious man among the crowd who were in the road. He called one of his viziers who accompanied him, told him in a whisper to bring that man whom he pointed out to him, and

to be sure not to alarm him. The vizier obeyed; and when the envious man was in the presence of the sultan, the latter addressed him in these words: "I am very happy, my friend, to see you: go," said he, speaking to an officer, "and count out directly from my treasury a thousand pieces of gold. Nay more, deliver to him twenty bales of the most valuable merchandise my magazines contain, and let a sufficient guard escort him home." After having given the officer this commission, he took his leave of the envious man, and continued his walk.

When I had told this history to the Genius who had assassinated the princess of the Isle of Ebony, I made the application to myself: "O Genius," I said to him, "you may observe how this benevolent monarch acted towards the envious man, and was not only satisfied in forgetting that he had attempted his life, but even sent him back with every benefit and advantage I have mentioned." In short, I employed all my eloquence to persuade him to imitate so excellent an example, and to pardon me. But to alter his resolution was impossible.

"All that I can do for you," he said, "is to spare your life; yet do not flatter yourself that I shall suffer you to return safe and well. I must, at least, make you feel what I can do by means of my enchantments." At these words he violently seized me, and carrying me through the vaulted roof of the subterranean palace, which opened at his approach, he elevated me so high that the earth appeared to me only like a small white cloud. From this height he again descended as quick as lightning, and alighted on the top of a mountain. On this spot he took up a handful of earth, and pronouncing, or rather muttering certain words, of which I could not comprehend the meaning, threw it over me: "Quit," he cried, "the figure of a man, and assume that of an ape." He immediately disappeared, and I remained quite alone, changed into an ape, overwhelmed with grief, in an unknown country, and ignorant whether I was near the dominions of the king, my father.

I descended the mountain and came to a flat, level country, the extremity of which I did not reach till I had travelled a month, when I arrived at the sea-coast. There was at this time a profound calm, and I perceived a vessel about half a league from the shore. That I might not omit taking advantage of so fortunate a circumstance, I broke off a large branch from a tree, and dragged it after me to the sea-side. I then got astride it, with a stick in each hand by way of oar. In this manner I rowed myself along towards the vessel, and when I was sufficiently near to be seen, I presented a most extraordinary sight to the sailors and passengers who were upon deck. They looked at me with great admiration and astonishment. In the mean time I got alongside, and taking hold of a rope, I climbed up to the deck. But as I could not speak, I found myself in the greatest embarrassment. And, in fact, the danger I now ran was not less imminent than what I had before experienced when I was in the power of the Genius.

The merchants who were on board were both scrupulous and superstitious, and thought that I should be the cause of some misfortunes happening to them during their voyage if they received me. "I will kill him," cried one, "with a blow of this handspike." "Let me shoot an arrow through his body," exclaimed another; "and then let us throw him into the sea," said a third. Nor would they have desisted from executing their different threats if I had not run to the captain, and thrown myself prostrate at his feet. In this supplicating posture I laid hold of the bottom of his dress, and he was so struck with this action, as well as with the tears that fell from my eyes, that he took me under his protection, declaring he would make any one repent who should offer me

the least injury. He even caressed and encouraged me. In order to make up for the loss of speech, I in return, showed him by means of signs how much I was obliged to him.

The wind which succeeded this calm was not a strong, but it was a favourable one. It did not change for fifty days, and we then happily arrived in the harbour of a large, commercial, well-built, and populous city. Here we cast anchor. The city was of still more considerable importance, as it was the capital of a powerful kingdom. Our vessel was immediately surrounded with a multitude of small boats, filled with those who came either to congratulate their friends on their arrival, or to inquire of whom and what they had seen in the country they had come from—or simply from mere curiosity to see a ship which had arrived from a distance.

Among the rest some officers came on board, who desired, in the name of the sultan, to speak to the merchants that were with us. "The sultan, our sovereign," said one of them to the merchants who immediately appeared, "has charged us to express to you how much pleasure your arrival gives him, and entreats each of you to take the trouble of writing upon this roll of paper a few lines. In order to make you understand his motive for this, I must inform you that he had a first vizier, who, besides his great abilities in the management of affairs, wrote in the greatest perfection. This minister died a few days since. The sultan is very much afflicted at it, and, as he values perfection in writing beyond everything, he has taken a solemn oath to appoint any person to the same situation who shall write as well. Many have presented specimens of their abilities, but he has not yet found any one throughout the empire whom he has thought worthy to occupy the vizier's place.

Each of those merchants, who thought they could write well enough to aspire to this high dignity, wrote whatever they thought proper. When they had done, I advanced and took the paper from the hands of him who held it. Everybody and particularly the merchants who had written, thinking that I meant either to destroy it or throw it into the water, instantly called out; but they were soon satisfied when they saw me hold the paper very properly, and make a sign that I also wished to write in my turn. Their fears were now changed to astonishment. Yet as they had never seen an ape that could write, and as they could not believe I was more skilful than others, they wished to take the roll from my hands—but the captain still continued to take my part. "Suffer him to try," he said, "let him write; if he only blots the paper I promise you I will instantly punish him: but if, on the contrary, he writes well, as I hope he will, for I have never seen any ape more clever and ingenious, nor one who seemed so well to understand everything, I declare that I will acknowledge him as my son; I once had one, who did not possess half so much ability as he does."

Finding that no one any longer opposed my design, I took the pen, and did not leave off till I had given an example of six different sorts of writing used in Arabia. Each specimen contained a distich, or impromptu stanza of four lines, in praise of the sultan. My writing not only excelled that of the merchants, but I dare say they had never seen any so beautiful, even in that country. When I had finished, the officers took the roll, and carried it to the sultan.

The monarch paid no attention to any of the writing except mine, which pleased him so much that he said to the officers, "Take the finest and most richly-caparisoned horse from my stable, and also the most magnificent robe of brocade possible, in order to adorn the person of him who has written these six varieties, and bring him to me." At this order of the sultan, the officers could not forbear laughing, which irritated him so much that he would have punished them, had they not said, "We entreat your majesty to pardon us ;

these are not written by a man, but by an ape." "What do you say?" cried the sultan; "are not these wonderful specimens of writing from the hand of a man?" "No, sire," answered one of the officers; "we assure your majesty that we saw an ape write them." This matter appeared too wonderful to the sultan for him not to be desirous of seeing me. "Do as I command you," said he to them; "and hasten to bring me this extraordinary ape."

The officers returned to the vessel, and showed their order to the captain, who said the sultan should be obeyed. They immediately dressed me in a robe of very rich brocade, and carried me on shore, where they set me on the horse of the sultan, who was waiting in his palace for me, with a considerable number of people belonging to the court, whom he had assembled to do me the more honour. The march commenced, while the gate, streets, public buildings, windows, and terraces of both the palaces and houses were all filled with an immense number of persons, of every age and sex, whom curiosity had drawn together from all quarters of the town, to see me, for the report was spread in an instant that the sultan had chosen an ape for his grand vizier. After having afforded so uncommon a sight to all these people, who ceased not to express their surprise by violent and continued shouting, I arrived at the sultan's palace.

I found the sultan seated on his throne, in the midst of the nobles of his court; I made him three low bows, and the last time I prostrated myself, kissed the earth by his feet. I then got up, and seated myself exactly like an ape. No part of the assembly could withhold their admiration, nor did they comprehend how it was possible for an ape to be so well acquainted with the form and respect attached to sovereigns; nor was the sultan the least astonished. The whole ceremony of audience would have been complete if I had only been able to add speech to my actions; but apes never speak, and the advantage of having once been a man did not now afford me that privilege.

The sultan took leave of the courtiers, and there remained with him only the chief of his eunuchs, a little young slave, and myself. He went from the hall of audience into his own apartment, where he ordered some food to be served up. While he was at table, he made me a sign to come and eat with him. As a mark of my obedience, I got up, kissed the ground, and then seated myself at table; I ate, however, with much modesty and forbearance.

Before they cleared the table, I perceived a writing desk, which, by a sign, I requested them to bring me; as soon as I had got it, I wrote upon a large peach some lines of my own composition, which evinced my gratitude to the sultan. His astonishment at reading them, after I presented the peach to him, was still greater than before. When the things were taken away, they brought a particular sort of liquor, of which he desired them to give me a glass. I drank it, and then wrote some fresh verses, which explained the state in which I now found myself after so many sufferings. The sultan, having read these also, exclaimed, "A man who should be capable of doing thus would be one of the greatest men that ever lived." The prince then ordered a chess-board to be brought, and asked me, by a sign, if I could play, and would engage with him. I kissed the ground, and putting my hand on my head, I showed him I was ready to receive that honour. He won the first game, but the second and third were in my favour. Perceiving that this gave him some little pain, I wrote a stanza to amuse him, and presented it to him; in which I said that two powerful armed bodies fought the whole day with the greatest ardour, but that they made peace in the evening, and passed the night together very tranquilly upon the field of battle.

All these circumstances appearing to the sultan much beyond what he had ever seen or heard of the address and ingenuity of apes, he wished to have

more witnesses of these prodigies. He had a daughter who was called the Queen of Beauty; he therefore desired the chief of the eunuchs to fetch her. "Go," said he to him, "and bring your lady here; I wish her to partake of the pleasure I enjoy." The chief of the eunuchs went and brought back the princess with him. On entering, her face was uncovered, but she was no sooner within the apartment than she instantly threw her veil over her, and said to the sultan, "Your majesty must have forgotten yourself. I am surprised that you order me to appear before men." "What is this, my daughter?" answered the sultan; "it seems that you are the person who has forgotten herself. There is no one here but the little slave, the eunuch your governor, and myself, and we are always at liberty to see your face. Why, then, do you put down your veil, and assert that I have done wrong in ordering you to come here?" "Sire," replied the princess, "your majesty will be convinced I am not mistaken. The ape which you see there, although under that form, is not an ape, but a young prince, the son of a great king. He has been changed into an ape by enchantment. A Genius, the son of the daughter of Eblis, has been guilty of this malicious action, after having cruelly killed the princess of the Isle of Ebony, daughter of King Epitmarus."

The sultan was astonished at this speech, and turning to me, asked, but no longer by signs, whether what his daughter said was true. As I could not speak, I put my hand upon my head to show that she had spoken the truth. "How came you to know, daughter," said the king, "that this prince had been transformed into an ape by means of enchantment?" "Sire," replied the princess, "your majesty may recollect, that when I first came from the nursery, I had an old woman as one of my attendants. She was very well skilled in magic, and taught me seventy rules of that science, by virtue of which I could instantly cause your capital to be transported to the middle of the ocean, nay, beyond Mount Caucasus. By means of this science, I know every person who is enchanted, the moment I behold them—not only who they are, but by whom also they were enchanted. Be not, therefore, surprised that I have at first sight discovered this prince, in spite of the charm, which prevented him from appearing in your eyes such as he really is." "My dear daughter," answered the sultan, "I did not think you were so skilful." "Sire," added the princess, "these things are curious, and worthy of being known; but I do not think it becomes me to boast of them." "Since this is the case," replied the sultan, "you can perhaps dissolve the enchantment of this prince." "I can, sire," said she, "and restore him to his own form." "Do so, then," interrupted the sultan, "for you cannot give me greater pleasure, as I wish to have him for my grand vizier, and bestow you upon him for a wife." "I am ready, sire," answered the princess, "to obey you in all things you please to command."

The Queen of Beauty then went to her apartment, and returned with a knife, which had some Hebrew characters engraved on the blade. She desired the sultan, the chief of the eunuchs, the little slave, and myself to go down into a secret court of the palace, and then, leaving us under a gallery which surrounded the court, she went into the middle of it, where she described a large circle, and traced several words, both in the ancient Arabic characters and those which are called the characters of Cleopatra.

When she had done this, and prepared the circle in the manner she wished, she went and placed herself in the midst of it, where she began making her abjurations, and repeating some verses from the Koran. By degrees, the air became obscure, as if night was coming on and the whole world was vanishing. We were seized with the greatest fright, and this was the more increased when we saw the Genius, the son of the daughter of Eblis, suddenly appear, in the shape of an enormous lion.

The princess no sooner perceived this monster than she said to it, "Dog, instead of cowering before me, how darest thou present thyself under this horrible form, thinking to alarm me?" "And how darest thou," replied the lion, "break the treaty, which we have made and confirmed by a solemn oath, not to injure each other?" "Ah, wretch!" added the princess, "thou art the person I am to reproach on that account." "Thou shalt pay dearly," interrupted the lion, "for the trouble thou hast given me of coming here." In saying this, he opened his horrible jaws, and advanced forward to devour her; but she, being on her guard, jumped back, and had just time to pluck out a hair, and pronouncing two or three words, she changed it into a sharp scythe, with which she immediately cut the lion in pieces, through the middle.

The two parts of the lion directly disappeared, and the head only remained, which changed into a large scorpion. The princess then took the form of a serpent, and began a fierce combat with the scorpion, which, finding itself in danger of being defeated, changed into an eagle, and flew away. But the serpent then became another eagle, black, and more powerful, and went in pursuit of it. We now lost sight of them for some time.

Shortly after they had disappeared, the earth opened before us, and a black and white cat appeared, the hairs of which stood quite on end, and which made a most horrible mewing. A black wolf directly followed, and gave it no respite. The cat, being hard pressed, changed into a worm, and, finding itself near a pomegranate, which had fallen by accident from a tree that grew upon the bank of a deep but narrow canal, instantly made a hole in it, and concealed itself there. The pomegranate immediately began to swell, and became as large as a gourd, which then rose up as high as the gallery, and rolled backwards and forwards there several times; it then fell down to the bottom of the court, and broke into many pieces.

The wolf, in the meantime, transformed itself into a cock, ran to the seeds of the pomegranate, and began swallowing them, one after the other, as fast as possible. When it could see no more, it came to us, with its wings extended, and making a great noise, as if to inquire of us whether there were any more seeds. There was one lying on the border of the canal, which the cock, in going back, perceived, and ran towards it as quick as possible; but at the very instant in which its beak was upon it, the seed rolled into the canal and changed into a small fish. The cock then flew into the canal, and becoming a pike, pursued the little fish. They were both two hours under water, and we knew not what was become of them, when we heard the most horrible cries, that made us tremble. Soon after, we saw the Genius and the princess, all on fire. They threw the flames against each other with their breath, and at last came to a close attack. Then the fire increased, and everything about was encompassed with smoke and flame to a great height. We were afraid, and not without reason, that the whole palace would be burnt; but we soon had a much more dreadful cause of terror, for the Genius, having disengaged himself from the princess, came towards the gallery where we were, and blew his flames all over us. This would have destroyed us if the princess, running to our assistance, had not compelled him by her cries to retreat to a distance, and guard himself against her. In spite, however, of all the haste she made, she could not prevent the sultan from having his head singed and his face scorched; the chief of the eunuchs too was stifled, and consumed on the spot; and a spark flew into my right eye, and blinded me. Both the sultan and myself expected to perish, when we suddenly heard the cry of "Victory, victory!" and the princess immediately appeared to us in her own form, while the Genius was reduced to a heap of ashes.

The princess approached us, and in order to lose no time, she asked for a

cup full of water, which was brought by the young slave, whom the fire had not injured. She took it, and after pronouncing some words over it, she threw some of the water upon me, and said, "If thou art an ape by enchantment, change thy figure, and take that of a man, which thou hadst before." She had hardly concluded, when I again became a man, the same as before I was changed, except with the loss of one eye.

I was preparing to thank the princess, but she did not give me time, before she said to the sultan, her father, "I have gained, sire, the victory over the Genius, as your majesty may see, but it is a victory which has cost me dear. I have but a few moments to live, and you will not have the satisfaction of completing the marriage you intended. The fire, in this dreadful combat, has penetrated my body, and I feel that it will soon consume me. This would not have happened if I had perceived the last seed of the pomegranate, when I was in the shape of a cock, and had swallowed it as I did the others. The Genius had fled to it as his last retreat, and on that depended the success of the combat, which would then have been fortunate, and without danger to me. This omission obliged me to have recourse to fire, and fight with that powerful weapon, between heaven and earth, as you saw me. In spite of his dreadful power and experience, I convinced him that my knowledge and art were greater than his. I have at length conquered and reduced him to ashes, but I cannot avoid the death which I feel approaching."

The princess had no sooner finished this account of the battle, than the sultan, in a tone of voice which showed how much he was agitated by this recital, answered, "You see, my daughter, the state in which your father is. Alas! I am only astonished that I am still alive. The eunuch, your governor, is dead; and the prince, whom you have delivered from enchantment, has lost an eye." He could say no more, for his tears and sobs stopped his utterance. Both his daughter and myself were extremely affected at his sufferings, and mingled our tears with his.

While we were each of us indulging in this excess of sorrow, the princess suddenly exclaimed, "I burn, I burn." She perceived that the fire which consumed her, had at last seized her whole body, and she did not cease calling out, "I burn," till death put an end to her almost insupportable sufferings. The effect of this fire was so extraordinary, that in a few minutes she was reduced, like the Genius, to a heap of ashes.

I need not say how much this dreadful and melancholy sight affected us. I would rather have continued an ape, or a dog, my whole life, than have seen my benefactress perish in such a horrid manner. The sultan, too, on his part, was beyond measure afflicted. It is almost impossible to conceive what lamentable cries he uttered, beating himself at the same time most violently on his head and breast, till at last, yielding to despair, he fainted, and I feared even his life would fall a sacrifice.

In the mean time the cries of the sultan brought the eunuchs and officers to his assistance, and they found great difficulty in recovering him. There was no occasion for either the prince or myself giving them a very long detail of this adventure, to convince them of the propriety of our sorrow; the two heaps of ashes to which the princess and the Genius had been reduced, were quite sufficient. As the sultan could scarcely support himself, he was obliged to lean upon them in order to get to his apartment.

As soon as the knowledge of an event so tragical was spread through the palace and the city, every one lamented the melancholy fate of the princess, surnamed the Queen of Beauty, and joined in the grief of the sultan. They put on mourning for seven days, and performed many ceremonies; the ashes of the Genius they scattered in the wind, but collected those of the princess in a costly

vase, and preserved them; this vase was then deposited in a superb mausoleum, which was erected on the very spot where the ashes had been found.

The grief which preyed upon the suitor for the loss of his daughter, was the origin of a disease that confined him to his bed for a whole month. He had not quite recovered his health, when he called me to him, and said, "Listen, prince, and attend to the order which I am going to give you; if you fail to execute it, your life will be the forfeit." I assured him I would obey. Resuming then the discourse, he added, "I have always lived in a state of the greatest happiness; nor has any unfortunate event ever occurred. Your arrival has destroyed this enjoyment. My daughter is dead; her governor is no more; and I have escaped with my life only by a miracle. You are the cause of all these misfortunes, for which I am incapable of consolation. These are the reasons which induce me to desire you would leave me in peace; but go immediately, for if you remain any longer, it will be the cause of my death also, since I am persuaded your presence is productive only of misfortune. This is all I have to say to you. Go, and take care you never again appear in my kingdom; if you do, no consideration shall prevent my making you repent of it." I wished to speak, but he prevented me by uttering some angry words, and I was obliged to leave his palace.

Driven about, rejected and abandoned by every one, I knew not what was to become of me. Before I left the city, I went into a bath, I got my beard and eyebrows shaved, and put on the dress of a calender. I then began my journey, lamenting less my own miserable condition, than the death of the two beautiful princesses, of which I had been the unhappy cause. I travelled through many countries without making myself known; at last I resolved to visit Bagdad, in hopes of being able to present myself to the Commander of the Faithful, and excite his compassion by the recital of so strange a history. I arrived here this evening, and the first person I met was the calender, my brother, who has already related his life. You are acquainted, madam, with the sequel, and how I came to have the honour of being at your house.

When the second calender had finished his history, Zobeidè, to whom he had addressed himself, said, "You have done well, and I give you leave to go whenever you please." But instead of taking his departure, he entreated her to grant him the same favour she had done the other calender, near whom he went and took his place. Then the third calender, knowing it was his turn to speak, addressed himself like the others to Zobeidè, and began his history as follows.

THE HISTORY OF THE THIRD CALENDER, THE SON OF A KING.

WHAT I am going to relate, most honourable lady, is of a very different nature from what you have already heard. The two princes who have recited their histories, have each of them lost an eye, as it were by destiny; while my loss has been in consequence of my own fault, in wilfully seeking the cause of misfortune, as you will find by what I am going to mention.

I am called Agib, and am the son of a king, whose name was Cassib. After his death I took possession of his throne, and established my residence in the same city which he had made his capital. This city, which is situated on the sea-coast, has a remarkably handsome and safe harbour, with an arsenal sufficiently extensive to supply an armament of a hundred and fifty vessels of war, always lying ready for service on any occasion; and to equip fifty merchantmen,

and as many sloops and yachts, for the purpose of amusement and pleasure on the water. My kingdom was composed of many beautiful provinces, and also a number of considerable islands, almost all of which were situated within sight of my capital.

The first thing I did was to visit the provinces; I then made them arm and equip my whole fleet, and went round to all my islands in order to conciliate the affections of my subjects, and to confirm them in their duty and allegiance. After having been at home some time, I went again; and these voyages, by giving me some slight knowledge of navigation, infused such a taste for it in my mind, that I resolved to go in search of discoveries beyond my islands. For this purpose I equipped only ten ships, and embarking in one of them, we set sail.

During forty days our voyage was prosperous; but on the night of the forty-first the wind became adverse, and so violent, that we were driven at the mercy of the tempest, and thought we should have been lost. At break of day, however, the wind abated, the clouds dispersed, and the sun brought fine weather back with it. We now landed on an island, where we remained two days, to take in some provisions. Having done this, we again put to sea. After ten days' sail, we began to hope to see land; for since the storm we had encountered, I had altered my intention, and determined to return to my kingdom, but I then discovered that my pilot knew not where we were. In fact, a sailor, on the tenth day, who was ordered to the masthead for the purpose of making discoveries, reported that to the right and left he could perceive only the sky and sea, which bounded the horizon, but that straight before him he observed a great blackness.

At this intelligence the pilot changed colour, and throwing his turban on the deck with one hand, he smote his face with the other, and then cried out, "Ah, sire, we are lost; not one of us can possibly escape the danger in which we are; and with all my experience, it is not in my power to insure the safety of a single soul." Having said this, he began to weep like one who thought his destruction inevitable, and his despair spread alarm and fear through the whole vessel. I asked him what reason he had for this despair. "Alas, sire," he answered, "the tempest which we have gone through has so driven us from our track, that by midday to-morrow we shall find ourselves near that blackness, which is nothing but a black mountain, consisting entirely of a mass of loadstone, that will soon attract our fleet, on account of the bolts and nails in the ships. To-morrow, when we shall come within a certain distance, the power of the loadstone will be so violent, that all the nails will be drawn out, and fastened to the mountain; our ships will then fall in pieces, and sink. As it is the property of a loadstone to attract iron, and at the same time to increase its own power by this attraction, the mountain towards the sea is entirely covered with nails, that belonged to the infinite number of ships of which it has proved the destruction; and this at the same time both preserves and augments its power or virtue.

"This mountain," continued the pilot, "is very steep, and on the summit there is a large dome, made of fine bronze; which is supported upon columns of the same metal. Upon the top of the dome there is also a bronze horse, with the figure of a man upon it. A plate of lead covers his breast, upon which there are some talismanic characters engraven; and there is a tradition, sire," added he, "that this statue is the principal cause of the loss of so many vessels and men, and that it will never cease from being destructive to all who shall have the misfortune to approach it until it be overthrown." The pilot having finished his speech, renewed his tears, which excited those of the whole crew. As for myself, I did not doubt that I was now approaching the end of my days.

Every one began to think of his own preservation, and to try every possible means conducive to that end; and during the uncertainty of the event, they all appointed, by a sort of will, the survivors, if any should be saved, the heirs of the rest.

The next morning we distinctly perceived the black mountain; and the idea we had formed of it made it appear still more dreadful and horrid than it really was. About midday we found ourselves so near it, that we began to perceive what the pilot had foretold. We saw the nails, and every other piece of iron belonging to the vessel, fly towards the mountain, against which, by the violence of the magnetic attraction, they struck with a horrible noise. The vessel then immediately fell to pieces, and sunk to the bottom of the sea, which was so deep in this place, that we could never discover the bottom by sounding. All my people were lost; but God had pity upon me, and suffered me to save myself by laying hold of a plank, which was driven by the wind directly to the foot of the mountain. I did not experience the least harm, and had the good fortune to land in a place where there were steps, which led to the summit. I was much rejoiced at sight of these steps, for there was not the least piece of land either to the right or left, upon which I could have set my foot to save myself. I returned thanks to God, and invoking his holy name, began to ascend the mountain. The path was narrow, and so steep and difficult, that had the wind been at all violent, it must have blown me into the sea. I arrived at last at the summit without any accident, and entering the dome, I prostrated myself on the ground, and offered my thanks to God for the favour he had shown me.

I passed the night under this dome; and while I was asleep, a venerable old man appeared to me, and said, "Agib, attend; when you awake, dig up the earth under your feet, and you will find a brazen bow with three leaden arrows, manufactured under certain constellations, in order to deliver mankind from many evils, which continually menace them. Shoot these three arrows at the statue: the man will then fall into the sea, and the horse at your feet, which you must bury in the same spot from whence you take the bow and arrows. This being finished, the sea will begin to be agitated, and will rise as high as the foot of the dome, at the top of the mountain. When it shall have risen thus high, you will see a small vessel come towards the shore, with only one man in it, who holds an oar in each hand. This man will be of brass, but different from the one that was overthrown. Embark with him without pronouncing the name of God, and let him conduct you. In ten days he will have carried you into another sea, where you will find the means of returning to your own country in safety; provided, as I have already told you, you forbear from mentioning the name of God during the whole of your voyage."

Such was the discourse of the old man. As soon as I was awake, I got up, much consoled by this vision, and did not fail doing as the old man had ordered me. I uncovered the bow and the arrows, and shot them at the statue. With the third arrow I overthrew the man, who fell into the sea, while the horse lay at my feet. I buried it in the place where I found the bow and arrows, and while I was doing this, the sea rose by degrees, till it reached the foot of the dome on the summit of the mountain. I perceived a vessel at a distance coming towards me. I offered my benedictions to God at thus seeing my dream in every respect proving a reality. The vessel at length approached the land, and I saw in it a man made of brass, as had been described. I embarked and took particular care not to pronounce the name of God. I did not even utter a single word. When I sat down, the brazen figure began to row from the mountain. He continued doing so without inter-

mission till the ninth day, when I saw some islands, which made me hope I should soon be free from every danger that I dreaded. The excess of my joy made me forget the order that had been given me as a security, "Blessed be God," I cried out, "God be praised."

I had hardly finished these words, when both the vessel and brazen man sunk to the bottom. I remained in the water, and swam during the rest of the day towards the nearest island. The night, which came on, was exceedingly dark; and as I no longer knew where I was, I continued swimming at a venture. My strength was at last quite exhausted, and I began to despair of being able to save myself, when the wind having much increased, a wave as large as a mountain threw me upon a flat, shallow place, and on retiring left me there. I immediately made haste to get farther on land, for fear another wave should come and carry me back. The first thing I then did, was to undress, and wring the water out of my clothes, and spread them upon the sand, which was still warm from the heat of the preceding day.

The next morning, as soon as the sun had quite dried my dress, I put it on, and began to reconnoitre; and tried to discover where I was. I had not walked far, before I found out I was upon a small desert island, very pleasant, and where there were many sorts of fruit-trees, as well as others; but I observed, that it was at a considerable distance from the mainland, which rather lessened the joy I felt at having escaped from the sea. I nevertheless trusted in God to dispose of my fate according to his will: soon afterwards I discovered a very small vessel, which seemed to come full sail directly from the mainland, with her prow towards the island where I was. As I had no doubt they were coming to anchor here, and as I knew not what sort of people they might be, whether friends or enemies, I determined at first not to show myself. I got up, therefore, into a very thick tree, from whence I could examine their countenances without danger. The vessel soon sailed up a small creek or bay, where ten slaves landed, with a spade and other instruments in their hands, for the purpose of digging the earth. They went towards the middle of the island, where I observed them stop, and dig up the earth for some time; and by their actions, they appeared to me to lift up a trap-door. They immediately returned to the vessel, from which they landed various kinds of provisions and furniture, and each taking a load, they carried them to the place where they had before dug up the ground. They then seemed to descend, which made me conjecture there was a subterraneous place. I saw them once more go to the vessel, and come back with an old man, who brought with him a youth, seemingly well made, and about fourteen or fifteen years old. They all descended at the spot where the trap-door had been lifted up. After they came out again, they shut down the door, and covered it with earth as before; and then returned to the creek where their vessel lay; but I observed that the young man did not come back with them; whence I concluded, that he remained in the subterraneous place. This circumstance very much excited my astonishment.

The old man and the slaves then embarked, and hoisting the sails, made way for the mainland. When I found the vessel had got so far off, that I could not be perceived by the crew, I came down from the tree, and went directly to the place where I had seen them dig away the earth. I now did the same thing, and at last discovered a stone two or three feet square. I lifted it up, and found that it concealed the entrance to a flight of stone stairs. I descended, and at the bottom perceived that I was in a large chamber, the floor of which was covered with a carpet, as was also a sofa and some cushions with a rich stuff, where I saw a young man sitting down with a fan in his hand. I distinguished all these things by the light of two torches, as I did also the fruits and pots of flowers, which were near him. At the sight of me, the young man was much

alarmed; but in order to give him courage, I said to him on entering, "Whoever you are, fear nothing, sir: a king, and the son of a king, as I am, is not capable of doing you any injury. On the contrary, you may esteem it as a most fortunate circumstance that I am come here to deliver you from this tomb, where you seem to me to have been buried alive; but for what reasons I am unable to tell. What, however, most embarrasses me (for I will not conceal that I have been a witness to everything that has passed since you landed on this island), and what I cannot understand is, that you seem to have suffered yourself to have been buried here without making any resistance."

The young man was much encouraged by this speech, and requested in a pleasing manner, that I would take a seat near him. As soon as I was seated, he said, "I am about, prince, to inform you of a circumstance, the singular nature of which will very much surprise you.

"My father is a jeweller, who has acquired by his industry and great skill in his profession a very large fortune. He has a great number of slaves and factors, who make many voyages for him in his own vessels. He has also correspondents in many courts, which he supplies with all the precious stones and jewels for which they have occasion. He had been married a long time without having any children, when one night he dreamed that he should have a son, whose life, however, would be but short. This dream, when he awoke, gave him great uneasiness. Some time after this, my mother informed him that she was with child, and the very time when she thought she had conceived, agreed exactly with my father's dream. At the end of nine months I was born, to the great joy of all the family. My father having observed the moment of my birth with the greatest exactness, consulted the astrologers, who answered, 'Your son will live without any accident or misfortune till he is fifteen; but he will then run a great risk of losing his life, and will not escape from it without much difficulty. If, however, he should have the good fortune not to perish, his life will continue many years. About this time too,' they added, 'the equestrian statue of brass, which stands on the top of the loadstone mountain, will be overthrown by Prince Agib, the son of King Cassib, and fall into the sea; and the stars also discover, that fifty days afterwards your son will be killed by that prince.'

"As this prediction agreed with my father's dream, he was very much struck and afflicted by it. He did not, however, omit taking the greatest care of my education till the present moment, which is the fifteenth year of my age. He was yesterday informed that ten days ago the brazen figure was overthrown by the prince whom I mentioned to you: and this intelligence cost him so many tears and alarms, that he hardly looks like the same man.

"Upon this prediction of the astrologers, my father tried every means to deceive my horoscope, and preserve my life. For a long time past, he has taken the precaution to have this habitation built, in order to conceal me for the fifty days, after he learned that the statute had been overthrown. It was on this account, that, as soon as he knew what had happened ten days since, he came here for the purpose of concealing me during the forty days that remain; and he has promised at the expiration of that time, to come and take me back. As for myself," he added, "I have the best hopes, for I do not believe that Prince Agib will come and look for me underground, in the midst of a desert island. This, my lord, is all I had to inform you of."

While the son of the jeweller was relating his history to me, I inwardly laughed at those astrologers, who had predicted that I should take away his life; and I felt myself so very unlikely to verify their prediction, that he had scarcely finished speaking, before I exclaimed with transport, "Have confidence, my dear sir, in the goodness of God, and fear nothing. Esteem it only as a debt you had to pay, and that from this hour, you are free from it. I am

delighted at finding myself so fortunate as to be here, after having been shipwrecked, in order to guard you against those who would attempt your life. I will not quit you for a moment during the forty days, which the vain and absurd conjectures of the astrologers have made you apprehensive of. During this time, I will render you every service in my power, and afterwards I will take advantage, with your and your father's permission, of embarking in your vessel, in order to return to the continent; and when I shall have got back to my kingdom, I shall never forget the obligation I am under to you, and will endeavour to prove my gratitude by every means in my power."

I encouraged him by this discourse, and thus gained his confidence. I took care, from the fear of alarming him, not to inform him that I was the very person whom he dreaded; nor give him the least suspicion on the subject. We conversed about various things till night; and I easily discovered that the young man possessed a sensible and well-informed mind. We ate together out of his store of provisions, which were so abundant, that they would have lasted more than the forty days, had there been other guests beside myself. We continued our conversation some time after supper, and then retired to rest.

When he got up the next morning, I presented him with a basin and some water. He washed himself, while I prepared the dinner, which I served up at a proper time. After our repast, I invented a sort of game to amuse us, not only during that day, but for the following. I prepared the supper in the same way I had done the dinner; we then supped and retired to rest, the same as the preceding day.

We had sufficient time to contract a friendship for each other. I perceived that he had an inclination for me, and on my side the regard was so strong, that I often said to myself, "The astrologers, who have predicted to the father that his son should be slain by my hands were impostors, for it was impossible I could commit so horrid a crime." In short, we passed thirty-nine days in the pleasantest manner possible in this subterraneous habitation.

At length, the fortieth arrived. The youth, when he was getting up, said to me, in a transport of joy, which he could not restrain, "Behold me now, prince, on the fortieth day, and thank God, and your good society, I am not dead. My father will not fail very soon to acknowledge his obligation, and furnish you with every means and opportunity in his power, which may be necessary for you to return to your kingdom. But while we are waiting," added he, "I beg of you to have the goodness to warm some water, that I may wash my whole body in the portable bath. I wish to cleanse myself and change my dress, in order to receive my father with the greater propriety." I put the water on the fire, and when it was just warm, I filled the portable bath. The young man got in: I both washed and rubbed him myself. He then got out, and went into the bed I had prepared for him, and I threw the cover over him. After he had reposed himself, and slept for some time, he said to me, "Oblige me, my prince, and bring me a melon and some sugar. I want to eat something to refresh me."

I chose one of the melons which remained, and put it on a plate, and as I could not find a knife to cut it, I asked the youth, if he knew where there was one. "There is one," he replied, "upon the cornice over my head." I looked up and perceived one there; but I strained myself so much in endeavouring to get it, that at the very moment I had it in my hand, my foot by some means got so entangled in the covering of the bed, that I unfortunately fell down on the young man, and pierced him to the heart with the knife. He expired the very same instant.

At this sight, I cried most bitterly: I beat my head and breast. I tore my habit, and threw myself on the ground in grief and despair. "Alas!" I cried,

"a few hours only remained for him to be out of the danger against which he sought an asylum; and at the very moment I thought the danger past, I am become the assassin, and have caused the prediction to come to pass. But I ask thy pardon, O Lord," I added, raising my head and hands towards heaven, "and if I am guilty of his death, I desire to live no longer."

After this misfortune, death would have been very acceptable to me, and I should have met it without dread. But we are neither afflicted with evil, nor blessed with good fortune always at the moment we may desire it.

In the mean time, reflecting that neither my tears nor sorrow could revive the youth, and that as the forty days were now concluding, I should be surprised by the father, I quitted the subterraneous building, and ascended to the top of the stairs. I replaced the large stone over the entrance, and covered it with the earth. I had scarcely finished, when looking towards the mainland, I perceived the vessel, which was coming for the young man. Meditating what plan I should pursue, I said to myself, "If I let them see me, it is probable the old man will seize me, and order his slaves to slay me, when he shall have discovered his son in the state in which I have left him. Whatever I could allege in my own justification would never persuade him of my innocence. It is surely better, then, to withdraw myself from his sight, while I have the power, than expose myself to his resentment."

Near the subterraneous cavern there was a large tree, the thick foliage of which seemed to me well adapted for concealment. I immediately got up into it, and had no sooner placed myself so as not to be seen, than I observed the vessel come to land in the same place it had before done. The old man and the slaves instantly came on shore, and approached the subterraneous dwelling in a manner that showed they had some hopes. But when they saw that the ground had been lately disturbed, they changed colour, especially the old man. They then lifted up the stone, and descended the stairs. They called the young man by his name, but no answer was returned. Their fears redoubled. They searched about, and at last found him stretched on his couch, with the knife through his heart, for I had not had the courage to draw it out. On seeing this, they uttered such lamentable cries, that my tears flowed afresh. The old man fainted, and the slaves brought him out in their arms, that he might feel the air, and for this purpose they placed him at the foot of the very tree in which I was. Notwithstanding all their cares, the unfortunate father remained so long in this state, that they more than once despaired of his life.

He at length recovered from this long fainting fit. The slaves then went down, and brought up the body of his son, clothed in the finest garments, and as soon as the grave, which they made, was ready, they put the body in. The old man, supported by two slaves, with his face bathed in tears, threw in the first piece of earth, after which the slaves filled up the grave. This being done, the furniture and remainder of the provisions were put on board the vessel. The old man, overcome with sorrow, was unable to support himself, and was therefore carried to the vessel in a sort of litter by the slaves, and they immediately put to sea. They soon got to a considerable distance from the island, and I lost sight of them.

I now remained alone in the island, and passed the following night in the subterraneous dwelling, which had not been again shut up; and the next day I took a survey of the whole island, resting in those places most adapted to the purpose, whenever I felt myself weary. I passed a whole month in this unpleasant manner; at the end of which time I perceived the sea considerably diminish, the island appeared to become sensibly larger, and the mainland approached nearer. In truth, the water decreased so much, that there was now only a small channel between me and the continent, and I passed over

without being deeper than the middle of my leg. I then walked so far on the flat sand, that I was greatly fatigued. I at last reached firmer ground, and was already at a considerable distance from the sea, when I saw before me something that appeared like a large fire. At this I was much rejoiced; "For here," said I to myself, "I shall certainly find some persons, as a fire cannot light itself." But as I went nearer my mistake began to clear up, and I soon found out, that what I had taken for a fire was a sort of castle of red copper, from which the rays of the sun were reflected in such a manner as to make it appear in flames.

I stopped near this castle, and sat down, as well to consider the beauty of the building, as in some degree to recover from my fatigue. I had not yet bestowed all the attention upon this magnificent house which it deserved, when I perceived ten well-made young men come out for the purpose, as it appeared, of walking; but what seemed to me more surprising was, that they were all blind of the right eye; an old man of rather a large stature, whose appearance was very venerable, accompanied them.

I was very much astonished at meeting so many people at the same time, who were not only blind of one eye, but had also lost the same eye. While I was endeavouring to discover in my own mind for what purpose, or by what circumstance, they were thus collected together, they accosted me; and showed signs of great joy at seeing me. After the first compliments had passed, they inquired of me what brought me there: I told them that my history was rather long; but if they would take the trouble to sit down, I would afford them the satisfaction they wished. They seated themselves, and I related to them everything that had happened to me, from the moment I had left my own kingdom till that instant. This narration greatly excited their surprise. When I had finished my story, they entreated me to come with them into the castle. I accepted their offer, and passing through a long suite of halls, antechambers, saloons, and cabinets, all well furnished and appointed, we came at length to a large and magnificent apartment, where there were ten small blue sofas, placed in a circle, but unconnected, which served both to sit on and rest during the day, and also to sleep upon in the night. In the midst of this circle there was another sofa, less raised, but of the same colour, upon which the old man of whom I have spoken sat, while the young ones seated themselves upon the other ten. As each sofa held only one person, one of the young men said to me, "Sit down, my friend, upon the carpet in the middle of this place; and do not endeavour to inform yourself of anything that regards us, nor ask the reason why we are all blind of the right eye; be satisfied with what you see, and do not carry your curiosity any further. The old man did not remain long seated; he got up and went out, but very soon returned, bringing with him a supper for the ten young men; to each of whom he distributed a certain portion. He gave me mine in the same way, which, like the rest, I ate alone. As soon as it was finished, the old man presented each of us with a cup of wine.

My history appeared to them so extraordinary, that they made me repeat it when supper was over. This afterwards led to a conversation, which lasted great part of the night. One of the young men now observing that it was so late, said to the old one, "You see that it is time to retire to rest, and yet you do not bring us what is necessary for us to discharge our duty." At this the old man got up, and went into a cabinet, from whence he brought upon his head ten basins, one after the other, all covered with blue stuff; he placed one of them with a torch before each of the young men. They uncovered their basins, in which there were some ashes, some charcoal in powder, and some lamp-black. They mixed all these together, and began to rub them over their faces, and smear their countenances until their appearance was very frightful. After they

had blacked themselves over in this manner, they began to weep, to make great lamentations, and to beat their head and breast, calling out incessantly all the time, "Behold the consequences of our idleness and debaucheries!"

They passed almost the whole night in this strange occupation; at last they gave over, when the old man brought them some water, in which they washed their face and hands. They then took off their dresses, which were much torn, and put on others, so that they did not appear to have been engaged in those extraordinary occupations to which I had been a witness. Judge what was my fear during all this time. I was tempted a thousand times to break the silence which they had imposed upon me, for the purpose of asking them questions; nor could I, during the remainder of the night, get any rest.

The following morning, as soon as we were up, we went out to take the air, and I then said unto them, "I must inform you, gentlemen, that I renounce the law you imposed upon me last night, as I can no longer observe it. You are wise men, and you have given me sufficient reason to believe that you possess an enlarged understanding; yet, at the same time, I have seen you do things of which none but madmen would be guilty. Whatever misfortune may happen to me in consequence, I cannot refrain from inquiring for what reason you daubed your faces with ashes, charcoal, and black paint, and how you have all lost an eye. Something very singular must be the cause of this, I entreat you therefore to satisfy my curiosity." Notwithstanding such pressing entreaties, they only answered that the inquiries I made did not relate to me, that I had no interest in their actions, and that I might remain in peace. We passed the day in conversing upon different subjects, and, when night approached, we supped separately, as before, and the old man again brought the blue basins, with the contents of which the others anointed themselves; they then wept, beat themselves, and exclaimed, "Behold the consequences of our idleness and our debaucheries!" The following night they repeated the same thing.

I could at last no longer resist my curiosity; and I very seriously entreated them to satisfy me, or inform me by what road I could return to my kingdom; for I told them, it was impossible to remain any longer with them, and be every night a witness to such an extraordinary sight, if I was not permitted to know the motives that produced it. One of the young men thus answered me for the rest: "Do not be astonished at what we do in your presence: if we have not hitherto yielded to your entreaties, it has been entirely out of friendship for you; and to spare you from the regret of being reduced to the same state in which you see us. If you wish to experience our unfortunate fate, you have only to speak, and we will give you the satisfaction you require." I told them; I was determined to know it at all events. "Once more," replied the same young man, "we advise you to restrain your curiosity; for it will cost you the sight of your right eye." "It is of no consequence," I answered, "and I declare to you, that if this misfortune does happen, I shall not consider you as the cause of it, but shall lay the blame entirely on myself." Again he represented to me, that, when I should have lost my eye, I must not expect to remain with them; even if I had thought of it; as their number was complete, and could not be increased. I told them that it would cause me much regret to separate myself from such agreeable company, but still, if it were necessary, I would submit to it; since, whatever might be the consequence, I was bent on obtaining the satisfaction I required.

The ten young men, observing that I was not to be shaken in my resolution, took a sheep, and killed it; after they had taken off the skin, they gave me the knife they had made use of, and said, "Take this knife; it will serve you for an occasion of which we will soon inform you. We are going to sew you up in this skin, in which it is necessary you should be entirely concealed. We shall

then leave you in this place, and retire. Soon afterwards, a bird of a most enormous size, which they call a roc, will appear in the air, and, taking you for a sheep, will plunge down upon you, and lift you up to the clouds; but do not let this alarm you. The bird will soon return with his prey towards the earth, and will lay you down on the top of a mountain. As soon as you shall feel yourself upon the ground, rip open the skin with the knife, and discover yourself. On seeing you, the roc will be alarmed, and fly away, leaving you at liberty. Do not stop there; but go on until you arrive at a castle of a most prodigious magnitude, entirely covered with plates of gold, set with large emeralds and other precious stones. Go to the gate, which is always open, and enter. All of us who are here have been in this castle; but we will tell you nothing of what we saw, nor what happened to us, as you will learn everything yourself. The only thing we can inform you of is, that it has cost each of us a right eye, and the penance which you have witnessed is what we are obliged to undergo in consequence of our having been there. The particular history of each of us is full of such wonderful adventures that they would form a large volume; but we cannot now tell you more."

As soon as the young man had finished this speech, I wrapped myself up in the sheep-skin, and took the knife which they had given me. After they had taken the trouble to sew me up in it, they left me in that place, and retired into their apartment. It was not long before the roc which they had mentioned, made its appearance, plunged down upon me, took me up in its talons, as if I were a sheep, and transported me to the summit of a mountain. When I perceived that I was upon the ground, I did not fail to make use of the knife. I ripped open the skin, threw it off, and appeared before the roc, who flew away the instant it saw me. This roc is a white bird, of an enormous size; its strength is such, that it will lift up elephants from the ground, and carry them to the top of mountains, where it devours them.

My impatience to arrive at the castle was such, that I reached it in less than half a day, and I certainly found it much more beautiful than it had been described. The gate was open, and I entered into a square court, of such vast extent that in it were ninety-nine doors, made of sandal-wood and aloes, and one of gold, not to reckon those of many magnificent staircases, which led to the upper apartments, and some others which I did not see. The hundred doors I have mentioned formed the entrances, either into the gardens, or into magazines filled with riches, or some other places, which contained things most surprising to behold.

Opposite to me, I saw an open door, through which I entered into a large saloon, where forty young females were sitting, whose beauty was so perfect that it was impossible for the imagination to form to itself anything beyond it. They were all very magnificently dressed, and as soon as they perceived me they got up, and, without waiting for me to pay my compliments, they called out, with appearance of great joy, "Welcome, my brave lord, you are welcome;" and one of them, speaking for the rest, said, "We have a long time expected a person like you. Your manner sufficiently shows that you possess all the good qualities we could wish, and we hope that you will not find our company either disagreeable or unworthy of you." After some resistance on my part, they forced me to sit down on a place that was more raised than theirs; and when I showed them it was unpleasant to me, they said, "It is your place; from this moment you are our lord, our master, and our judge; we are your slaves, and ready to obey your commands." Nothing in the world could have astonished me more than the desire and the eagerness these ladies professed to render me every possible service. One brought me some warm water to wash my feet; another threw some perfumed water over my hands;

some brought me whatever was necessary to change my dress; and others served up a magnificent collation; while another party presented themselves before me with a goblet in their hands, ready to pour out the most delicious wine. All this was done without any confusion and in such admirable order and such a pleasant way, that I was quite charmed. I ate and drank; after which, all the ladies, placing themselves around me, asked me to relate the particulars of my journey. I gave them so full an account, that it lasted till the beginning of night. When I had finished the relation of my history to the forty ladies, some of those who were seated nearest to me waited to entertain me, while others went out to seek for lights. They returned with such a prodigious quantity, that they produced almost the brilliancy of day; but they were arranged with so much symmetry and taste as we could hardly wish for.

Some of the other ladies covered the tables with dried fruits, sweetmeats, and other condiments likely to excite a desire for drinking; they also furnished the sideboard with various wines and liquors, while the remainder of the ladies came with several musical instruments. When everything was ready, they invited me to sit down at table; the ladies sat down with me, and we remained there a considerable time. Those who entertained us with the instruments, accompanied them with their voices, and formed a delightful concert. The rest began a sort of ball, and danced in pairs, one after the other, in the most graceful and elegant manner possible. It was past midnight before all these amusements were concluded. One of the ladies then addressing me, said, "You are fatigued with the distance you have come to-day, and it is time you should take some repose. Your apartment is prepared; but before you retire, you are requested to point out, from amongst us all, her who most pleases you, and she is destined to pass the night in your chamber." I answered, "It was impossible to make the choice they required, since they were all equally beautiful and engaging, and worthy both of my respect and services, and that I could not be guilty of the incivility of preferring any one to the rest."

The lady who had first spoken to me answered, "We are all very well persuaded of your good intentions, and we are well assured that the fear of giving rise to any jealousy amongst us is what prevents you; but do not let this stop you, for the happiness of her whom you shall choose will not make us jealous, because we have agreed that every day each shall have the same honour in her turn, and at the end of forty days we shall begin again. Choose then freely, and do not waste that time which you ought to give to the repose you stand so much in need of." I was obliged to yield to their entreaties, and I presented my hand, therefore, to the lady who had spoken for the rest; she immediately gave me hers, and they conducted us to a magnificent apartment. The other ladies then left us there, and retired to their own.

I had hardly finished dressing myself in the morning before the other thirty-nine ladies came into my apartment, differently adorned from the preceding day. They paid their compliments to me, and made inquiries after my health. They then conducted me to a bath, where they employed themselves in washing me, and rendering me every service I wanted, although contrary to my inclination; and when I came out, they brought me another dress, still more magnificent than the first. We passed the greatest part of the day at table, and when the hour of retiring came, they again entreated me to make choice of another amongst them, to remain as my companion. In short, madam, not to tire you by repeating the same thing over again, I may tell you at once that I passed a whole year with these forty ladies, taking each of them in their turn for my mistress; and that, during the whole of this time, the voluptuous life I led was not interrupted by the least uneasiness.

I was never more surprised than at the end of the year, when the forty ladies,

instead of presenting themselves to me with their accustomed good spirits, and making inquiries after my health, one morning entered my apartment with their countenances bathed in tears. They each came and embraced me, and said, "Adieu, dear prince, adieu; we are now compelled to leave you."

Their tears affected me very much. I entreated them to inform me of the cause of their grief, and why they were obliged, as they said, to leave me. "In the name of God, my beautiful ladies," I exclaimed, "tell me, I beseech you, is it in my power to console you? or will my aid and assistance prove useless?" Instead of answering me in a direct manner, they said, "Would to God we had never seen or known you. Many men have done us the honour of visiting us, previous to yourself; but no one possessed the elegance, the softness, the power of pleasing, the merit, of yourself, nor do we know how we shall be able to live without you." Upon this, they renewed their tears. "Amiable ladies," I cried, "do not, I beg of you, keep me any longer in suspense, but tell me the cause of your sorrow." "Alas!" answered they, "what else could afflict us but the necessity of separating ourselves from you. Perhaps we shall never meet again. Yet, still, if you really wished it, and had sufficient command over yourself for the purpose, it is not absolutely impossible for you to rejoin us." "In truth, ladies," I replied, "I do not at all understand what you mean; speak, I conjure you, more openly." "Well, then," said one of them, "to satisfy you, we must inform you we are all princesses, and the daughters of kings. You have seen in what manner, and under what conditions, we live here; but at the end of each year we are compelled to absent ourselves forty days, to fulfil some duties which cannot be dispensed with, but which we are not at liberty to reveal; after this, we again return to this castle. Yesterday the year finished, and to-day we must leave you. This is the great cause of our affliction. Before we go, we will give you the keys of everything, and particularly of the hundred doors, within which you will find ample room to gratify your curiosity and amuse your solitude during our absence. But, for your own sake, and for our particular interest, we entreat you to refrain from opening the golden door. If you do open it, we shall never see you again; and the fear we are in, lest you should, increases our sorrow. We hope you will profit by the advice we have given you. Your repose, your happiness, nay, your life, depends upon it; therefore, be careful. If you indiscreetly yield to your curiosity, you will also do us a considerable injury. We conjure you, therefore, not to be guilty of this fault, and to afford us the consolation of finding you here at the end of the forty days. We would take the key of the golden door with us, but it would be an offence to such a prince as you are to doubt your *circumspection and discretion*."

This speech affected me very sensibly. I made them understand that their absence would cause me much pain, and thanked them very much for the good advice they gave me. I assured them I would profit by it, and would perform things much more difficult if it would procure me the happiness of passing the remainder of my life with ladies of such rare and extraordinary merit. We took the most tender leave of each other; I embraced them all, and they departed from the castle, in which I remained quite alone.

The pleasantness of their company, good living, concerts, and various amusements, had so entirely engrossed my time during the whole year, that I had not the least opportunity, nor indeed inclination, to examine the wonders that were contained in this enchanted palace. I had not even paid any attention to the multitude of extraordinary objects which were continually before my eyes, so much was I taken up with the charms and accomplishments of the ladies, and the pleasure I felt at finding them always employed in

endeavouring to amuse me. I was very much afflicted at their departure; and although their absence was to last only forty days, this time, when deprived of their society, seemed to me an age.

I determined, in my own mind, to attend to the advice they had given me not to open the golden door; but as I was permitted, with that one exception, to satisfy my curiosity, I took the keys belonging to the others, which were regularly arranged, and opened the first door. I entered a fruit garden, to which I thought nothing in the world was comparable; not even that of which our religion promises us the enjoyment after death. The admirable order and arrangement in which the trees were disposed, the abundance and variety of the fruits, many of which were unknown to me, together with their freshness and beauty, and the elegant neatness apparent in every spot, ravished me with astonishment. Nor must I neglect to inform you that this delightful garden was watered in a most singular manner; small channels, cut out with great art and regularity, and of different sizes, conveyed the water in great abundance to the roots of some trees which required it, in order to send forth their first leaves and flowers; while others, whose fruits were already set, received it with a more sparing hand; and those where the fruit was much swelled, had still less, while a fourth sort, having the fruit come to its full size, obtained just what was sufficient to ripen it. The size also which all the fruits acquired, very much exceeded what we are accustomed to observe in our gardens. Besides which, those channels which conducted the water to the trees on which the fruit was ripe, had barely enough to preserve it in the same state without decaying it.

I could not sufficiently examine and admire so beautiful a spot; and I should never have left it if I had not from this beginning conceived a still higher idea of the things which I had not yet beheld. I returned with my mind full of the wonders I had beheld. I then closed that door and opened the next.

In the place of a fruit garden, I now discovered one of flowers, which was not less singular in its kind. It contained a spacious *parterre*, not watered with such abundance as the preceding, but with greater skill and management, as it did not supply each flower with more than it wanted. The rose, the jessamine, the violet, the narcissus, the hyacinth, the anemone, the tulip, the ranunculus, the carnation, the lily, and an infinity of other flowers, which in other places bloom at various times, come all into flower at once in this spot; and nothing can be more luxuriously soft than the air you breathe in this garden.

I then opened the third door, where I discovered a very large aviary. It was paved with different coloured marbles, of the finest and least common sort. The cages were of sandal wood and aloes, and contained a great number of nightingales, goldfinches, canaries, larks, and other birds, whose notes were sweeter and more melodious than any I had ever heard before. The vases, which contained their food and water, were of jasper or the most valuable agate. This aviary also, was kept with the greatest degree of neatness: and from its vast extent I conceive that it would employ not less than a hundred persons to keep it in the state it then was, and yet no one appeared either here or in the other gardens, in none of which did I observe a single weed that was noxious, nor the least superfluous thing that could offend the sight.

The sun was already set, and I retired much delighted with the warbling of the multitude of birds which were then flying about to find the most commodious place to perch and enjoy the repose of the night. I went back to my apartment, and determined to open all the other doors on the succeeding days, except the hundredth. The next day I did not fail to go to the fourth door and open it. But if that which I had seen on the foregoing days was capable of surprising me, what I now beheld put me in ecstasy. I first entered into a

large court, surrounded by buildings of a very singular sort of architecture, of which, to avoid being very prolix, I will not give you a description.

This structure had forty doors all open, each of which was an entrance into a sort of treasury, containing more riches than many kingdoms. The first contained large quantities of pearls, and what is almost incredible, the most valuable, which were as large as pigeons' eggs, were more numerous than the smaller. The second was filled with diamonds, carbuncles, and rubies; the third with emeralds; the fourth contained gold in ingots; the fifth gold in money; the sixth ingots of silver, and the two following silver money. The rest were filled with amethysts, chrysolites, topazes, opals, turquoises, hyacinths, and every other sort of precious stone we are acquainted with; not to mention agate, jasper, cornelian, and coral, both in branches, and whole trees, with which one apartment was entirely filled. Struck with surprise and admiration at the sight of all these riches, I exclaimed, "It is impossible that all the treasures of every potentate in the universe, if they were collected in the same spot, could equal these! How happy am I in possessing all these treasures, as well as the love of such charming princesses!"

I will not detain you, madam, by giving you an account of all the wonderful and valuable things which I saw on the following days; I will only inform you that I spent nine-and-thirty days in opening the ninety-nine doors, and in admiration of everything that offered itself to my view. There now remained only the hundredth, which I was forbidden to touch. The fortieth day since the departure of the charming princesses now arrived. If I had been able, only for that one day, to have had the power over myself I ought to have had, I should have been the happiest instead of the most miserable of men. They would have returned the next day, and the pleasure I should have experienced in receiving them ought to have acted as a restraint upon my curiosity; but through a weakness, which I shall never cease to lament, I yielded to the temptation of some evil spirit, who did not suffer me to rest till I had subjected myself to the pain and punishment I have since experienced.

I opened the fatal door, though I had promised not to attempt it. Before I even set my foot withinside, a very agreeable odour struck me, but so powerful, it made me faint. I soon, however, recovered, but instead of profiting by such warning, instantly shutting the door, and giving up all idea of satisfying my curiosity, I entered; having first waited till the odour was lessened and dispersed through the air. I then felt no inconvenience from it. I found a very large and vaulted room, the floor of which was strewn with saffron. It was illuminated with lights made of aloë-wood and ambergris, and placed on golden stands; these afforded a strong smell. The brightness caused by these was still farther heightened by many lamps of silver and gold, which were filled with oil composed of many perfumes.

Among the numerous objects which attracted my attention, was a black horse, the best-formed and most beautiful that ever was seen. I went close to it in order to observe it more attentively. The saddle and bridle, which were on it, were of massive gold, richly worked. On one side of its manger there was clean barley and sesame, and the other was filled with rose-water; I then took hold of its bridle, and led it towards the light, to examine it the better. I mounted it, and endeavoured to make it go, but as it would not move, I struck it with a switch, which I had found in its magnificent stable. It had hardly felt the stroke, before it began to neigh in a most dreadful manner; then spreading its wings, which I had not till that moment perceived, it rose so high in the air, that I lost sight of the ground. I now thought only of holding fast on its back; nor did I experience any injury if I except the great terror with which I was seized. At length it began to descend towards the earth, and

lighted upon the terraced roof of a castle; then, without giving me time to get down, it shook me so violently, that I fell off behind, and with the end of its tail it dashed out my right eye.

This was the way I became blind, and the prediction of the ten young lords was now instantly brought to my recollection. The horse itself immediately after spread its wings, took flight, and disappeared. I rose up much afflicted at the misfortune, which I had thus voluntarily brought upon myself. I traversed the whole terrace, keeping my hand up to my eye, as I experienced very considerable pain from the stroke. I then went down, and came to a saloon, which I immediately recognised from observing ten sofas disposed in a circle, and a single one in the middle less elevated; it was, in fact, in the very castle whence I had been carried up by the roc.

The ten young lords were not in it at that time. I however waited, and it was not long before they came, accompanied by the old man. They did not seem at all astonished at seeing me, nor at observing I had lost my right eye. "We are very sorry," they said, "we cannot congratulate you on your return in the manner we could have wished; but you know we were not the cause of your misfortune." "It would be," I replied, "very wrong in me to accuse you of it; I brought it entirely upon myself, and the fault lies with me alone." "If the unfortunate," answered they, "can derive any consolation from knowing that others are in the same situation, we can afford you that satisfaction. Whatever may have happened to you, be assured we have experienced the same. We have equally enjoyed every species of pleasure for a whole year; and we should have continued in the enjoyment of the same happiness, if we had not opened the golden door, during the absence of the princesses. You have not been more prudent than we were, and you have experienced the same punishment. We wish we could receive you into our society, to undergo the same penance we are performing, and of which we know not the duration; but we have before informed you of the motives which prevent us. You must, therefore, take your departure and go to the court of Bagdad, where you will meet with the person who will be able to decide your fate." They pointed out the road I was to follow; I then took my leave and departed.

During my journey, I shaved my beard and eyebrows, and put on the habit of a calender. I was a long time on the road, and it was only this evening that I arrived in this city. At the entrance of one of the gates I encountered these two calenders, my brethren, who were equally strangers with myself. We were all much surprised with each other at the singular circumstance of having each lost our right eye. We had not, however, much leisure to converse on the subject of our mutual disgraceful misfortune. We had only time, madam, to implore your assistance, and which you have so generously afforded us.

When the third calender had finished the recital of his history, Zobeidè, addressing herself both to him and his brethren, said, "Depart, you are all three at liberty to go wherever you please." "Pardon, madam," answered one of them, "we beg of you our curiosity, and permit us to stay and hear the adventures of these gentlemen, who have not yet spoken. The lady then turned to the side where the caliph, the vizier Giafar, and Mesrour, of whose real situation and character she was still ignorant, were, and desired each of them to relate his history.

The grand vizier, Giafar, who was always prepared to speak, immediately answered Zobeidè. "In order to obey you, madam," said he, "we have only to repeat to you what we already related before we entered. We are," he continued, "merchants of Moussoul, and we are come to Bagdad for the purpose of trading with our merchandise, which we have placed in the ware-

houses belonging to the khan where we live. We dined to-day together, with many others of our profession, at a merchant's of this city, who, after treating us with the most delicate viands and finest wines, had ordered a company of male and female dancers, and a set of musicians, both vocal and instrumental. The great noise and uproar which we all made, attracted the notice of the watch, who came and arrested many of the guests, but we had the good fortune to escape. As, however, it was so very late, and the door of our khan would be shut, we knew not where to go to. It happened accidentally that we passed through your street, and as we heard the sounds of pleasure and gaiety within your walls, we determined to knock at the door. This is the only relation we have to make, and which we have done according to your commands."

Zobeidè, after listening to this narration, seemed to hesitate on what she should say, which the three calenders observing, they entreated her to be equally generous to the three pretended merchants of Moussoul, as she had been to them. "Well, then," she cried, "I agree to it. I wish all of you to be under the same obligation to me. I will therefore do you this favour, but it is only on condition that you instantly quit this house, and go wherever you please. Zobeidè gave this order in a tone of voice that showed she meant to be obeyed; the caliph, the vizier, Mesrour, the three calenders, and the porter, therefore went away without replying a word, for the presence of the seven armed slaves served to make them very respectful. They had no sooner left the house, and the door was shut, than the caliph said to the three calenders, at the same time, without letting them know who he was, "What, gentlemen, as you are strangers, and but just arrived in this city, do you intend to do? and which way do you think of going, as it is not yet daylight?" "This very thing, sir," answered they, "much embarrasses us." "Follow us then," replied the caliph, "and we will relieve you from this difficulty." He then whispered his vizier, and ordered him to conduct them to his own house, and bring them to the palace in the morning. "I wish," added he, "to have their adventures written, for they are worthy of a place in the annals of my reign."

The vizier Giafar carried the three calenders home, the porter went to his own house, and the caliph, accompanied by Mesrour, returned to his palace. He retired to his couch, but his mind was so entirely occupied by all the extraordinary things he had both seen and heard, he was unable to close his eyes. He was particularly anxious to know who Zobeidè was, and the motives she could possibly have for treating the two black dogs so ill; and also the reason that Aminè's bosom was so covered with scars. The morning at length broke while he was still engaged with these reflections. He immediately got up and went into the room where he held his councils; he then gave audience, and seated himself on his throne.

It was not long before the grand vizier arrived, who, directly went through the usual ceremonies of respect. "Vizier," said the caliph to him, "the business which is now before us is not very pressing; that of the three ladies and the two black dogs is of more consequence, nor will my mind be free from agitation till I am fully informed of everything that has caused me so much astonishment. Go and order these ladies to attend, and, at the same time, bring back the three calenders with you. Begone, and remember I am impatient for your return."

The vizier, who was well acquainted with the quick and violent disposition of his master, hastened to obey him. He arrived at the house of the ladies, and informed them, with as much politeness as possible, of the orders he had received to conduct them to the caliph—but did not hint at anything relative to what passed the night before.

The ladies immediately put on their veils and went along with the vizier, who, in passing his own door, called for the calenders. They had just learnt that they had before seen the caliph, and had even spoken to him without even knowing it was he. The vizier brought them all to the palace, and executed his commission with so much diligence that the caliph was perfectly satisfied. This prince ordered the ladies to stand behind the doorway, which led to his own apartment, in order to preserve a certain decorum before the officers of his household. He kept the three calenders near him, who made it sufficiently apparent, by their respectful behaviour, that they were not ignorant in whose presence they had the honour to appear.

When the ladies were seated, the caliph turned himself towards them, and said, "When I inform you, ladies, that I introduced myself to you last night, disguised as a merchant, I shall, without doubt, cause you some alarm: you are afraid, probably, that you offended me, and you think, perhaps, that I have ordered you to come here only to show you some marks of my resentment; but be of good courage, and be assured that I have forgotten what is past, and that I am even very well satisfied with your conduct. I wish that all the ladies of Bagdad were possessed of as much sense as I have observed in you. I shall always remember the moderation with which you conducted yourselves after the incivility of which we were guilty towards you. I was, then, a simple merchant of Moussoul, but I am now Haroun Alraschid, the seventh caliph of the glorious house of Abbas, which holds the place of our great prophet. I have ordered you here only for the sake of being informed who you are, and to inquire of you for what reason one of you, after having ill-treated the two black dogs, wept with them. Nor am I less curious to learn why the bosom of another became so covered with scars.

Though the caliph pronounced these words very distinctly, and the three ladies understood them very well, the vizier Giafar, as was the custom, did not fail to repeat them. The prince had no sooner encouraged Zobeide by this speech, which he addressed to her, than she gave him the satisfaction he required, in the following manner.

THE HISTORY OF ZOBEIDE.

COMMANDER of the Faithful, the history which I am going to relate to your majesty is probably one of the most surprising you have ever heard. The two black dogs and myself are three sisters by the same mother and father; and I shall, in the course of my narration, inform you by what strange accident they have been transformed into these animals. The two ladies who live with me, and who are now here, are also my sisters by the same father, but by a different mother. She whose bosom is covered with scars is called Aminé; the name of the other is Safiè, and I am called Zobeide.

After the death of our father, the estate which he left us was equally divided amongst us. When my two half-sisters had received their share, they went and lived with their mother; my other two sisters and I remained with ours, who was still alive, and who, when she died, left a thousand sequins to each of us. When we had received what belonged to us, my two elder sisters, for I am the youngest, married. They of course went to live with their husbands, and left me alone. Not long after their marriage, the husband of my eldest sister sold everything he possessed, both of estate and moveables, and with the money he thus got together, and with what he received also with my sister, they both of them went over to Africa. Her husband there squandered away, in good living and dissipation, not only all his own fortune, but also that which my sister

brought him. At length, finding himself reduced to the greatest distress, he found out some pretext for a divorce, and drove her from him.

She returned to Bagdad, but not without suffering almost incredible evils during so long a journey. She came to seek a refuge at my house, in a state so deserving of pity, that she would have excited it even in the most obdurate hearts. I received her with every mark of affection she could expect from me; I inquired of her how she came to be in so wretched a condition; she informed me, with tears in her eyes, of the bad conduct of her husband, and of the unworthy treatment she had experienced from him. I was affected at her misfortunes, and mingled my tears with hers. I then made her go to the bath, and supplied her from my own wardrobe; this being done, I addressed these words to her: "You are my elder sister, and I shall always look upon you as a mother. During your absence, God has caused the little fortune which has fallen to my lot to prosper, and the occupation I have followed has been that of breeding and bringing up silk-worms. Be assured, that everything I possess is equally yours, and that you have the same power of disposing of it as myself."

From this time we lived together in the same house for many months in perfect harmony. We often talked about our other sister, and were much surprised at never hearing anything of her. At last she unexpectedly arrived, and in as miserable a state as the eldest had done. Her husband had ill-treated her in a similar manner, and I received her with the same kindness.

Some time after this, both my sisters, under the pretence, as they said, that they were a considerable burden to me, informed me that they had thoughts of marrying again. I told them, that if the only reason for this intention was the idea of being an expense to me, I begged they would continue to live with me without thinking of that, as my income was sufficient for us all three to live in the style and manner suitable to our condition; but I added, "I rather think you really wish to marry again. If that be the fact, I am, I own, very much astonished at it. How can you, after the experience you have had of the small degree of satisfaction and comfort attached to that state, ever think of it a second time? You must be very well aware that it is not common to meet with a virtuous and good husband. Believe me, it is better to continue to live together, and much the most agreeable."

Everything I said to them was without effect. They had determined, in their own minds, to marry, and they executed their intentions. At the end, however, of a few months, they came again to me, and expressed a thousand regrets for not having followed my advice. "You are, it is true, our youngest sister," they said, "but you possess more sense than we do. If you will once more receive us into your house, and only consider us as your slaves, we will never again be guilty of such a fault." "My dear sisters," answered I, "my regard for you is not changed since last we parted. Return and enjoy with me whatever I possess." I embraced them, and we lived together as before.

A year passed, and, we continued on the best terms. Observing that God had blessed my small fortune, I determined to make a sea voyage, and risk some part of it in commercial speculations. With this view I went with my two sisters to Balsora, where I purchased a vessel ready for sea, which I loaded with the merchandise I had brought with me from Bagdad. We set sail with a favourable wind, and soon reached the Persian Gulf. When we were in the open sea, we steered directly for India: and after twenty days' sail we made land. The first that appeared was a very high mountain, at the foot of which we perceived a town of considerable beauty and magnitude. As the wind was fresh, we soon arrived in the harbour, where we cast anchor.

I was too impatient to wait till my sisters were ready to accompany me: I

therefore disembarked by myself, and went directly to the gate of the town. I observed rather a numerous guard, most of them sitting down, and others who were standing with clubs in their hands. But the aspect of all of them was so hideous it frightened me. I saw, however, they did not stir, and even that their eyes were motionless. This gave me courage, and on approaching still nearer to them, I perceived they were all petrified. I then entered the town and passed through several streets, in all of which I observed men in every attitude, but they were without motion, and absolutely turned into stone. In the quarter of the town where the merchants resided, I found many shops shut up; and in some that were open I perceived other men who were also petrified. I looked up towards the chimneys, and as I perceived no smoke, I concluded that those who were in the houses were exactly in the same situation as every one in the streets, and that all the inhabitants were changed into stone.

Having arrived at a large open place in the middle of the town, I discovered a great gate, covered with plates of gold, the two folding doors of which were open; a silk curtain seemed drawn before it, and I could perceive a lamp suspended from the inside of the gate. After having considered this building some time, I did not doubt but it was the palace of the prince to whom this country belonged. Having been much astonished at not meeting with any one living person, I went in there, through the hopes of discovering some one. I drew aside the curtain, and my astonishment was much increased, when I saw in the vestibule a number of porters, or guards, some of them standing, others sitting down, and every one of them petrified.

I passed on to a large court, where there were many people: some seemed in the very act of going out, and others of entering: nevertheless, they all remained in the same place since they also were turned into stone, in the same manner as those which I had before seen. I passed on to a second court, and from thence to a third; but they were both deserted, and a sort of horrid silence reigned throughout the place. Having advanced to a fourth court, I saw opposite to me a very beautiful building, the windows of which were shut with a trellis of massive gold. I concluded that this was the apartment of the queen. I entered, and going into a large hall, I saw many black petrified eunuchs; I immediately passed on, and went into a chamber very richly decorated, in which I perceived a lady, who was also transformed to stone: I knew that this was the queen, by a crown of gold which she had upon her head, and by a necklace of pearls, which were as large and round as small nuts. I examined them very nearly, and thought I had never seen any more beautiful.

I continued to admire for some time the riches and magnificence of this apartment, and above all, the carpet, the cushions, and a sofa, which was covered with Indian stuff, of a gold ground, upon which there were the figures of men and of animals in silver, of very superior workmanship. From the chamber of the petrified queen, I passed on through many other magnificent apartments, of various descriptions, until I came to one of an immense size, in which there was a throne of massive gold, raised a few steps above the floor, enriched with large emeralds. Upon the throne there was a bed, formed of very rich stuff, round which there was a border of pearls; but what surprised me more than all the rest was a very brilliant light, which seemed to issue from above the bed. I was curious to discover what was the cause of it; I ascended, therefore, and leaning my head forward, I perceived, upon a small stool, a diamond, as large as an ostrich's egg, and so perfect that I could discover no defect in it. It sparkled so much, that I could scarcely support the brilliancy of it when I looked at it by daylight.

There was a bolster upon each side of the bed, and a large lighted torch, the use of which I did not understand. This circumstance, however, led me to

conclude that there was some one alive in this superb palace, for I could not suppose that these torches could continue burning of themselves. Many other singularities struck my attention in this chamber, but the diamond alone, which I have just mentioned, rendered it inesimable.

As all the doors were either wide open or only just pushed close, I passed through still more apartments, as beautiful as those which I had before seen. I then went to the offices and store-rooms, which were filled with innumerable riches, and I was so much engaged in observing all these wonders that I absolutely forgot myself. I thought neither of my vessel nor of my sisters, but was anxious only to satisfy my curiosity. In the mean time, night came on, and its approach told me it was time to retire. I then wished to go back the same way I came, but it was no easy matter to find it again. I wandered about through the apartments, and finding myself in the large chamber, in which were the throne, the bed, the large diamond, and the lighted torches, I resolved to pass the night there, and early the next morning to go back to my vessel. I threw myself upon the bed, though not without some fear in recollecting that I was alone in so deserted a place, and it was this fear, without doubt, which prevented me from sleeping.

It was now about midnight, when I heard a voice like that of a man who was reading the koran, in the same manner, and in a similar tone, as it was the custom to read it in our temples. This gave me great joy; I immediately got up, and taking a torch to light me, I went on from one chamber to another on that side whence I heard the voice. I stopped at the door of a cabinet, from which I was sure the voice issued; I laid down the torch on the ground, and looking in through a small opening, it seemed to me to be an oratory. I perceived within it, as in our temples, a sort of niche, which pointed out the way it was necessary to turn when we repeated our prayers. There were also some lamps suspended, and also two chandeliers, containing large candles, made of white wax, all of which were lighted.

I perceived also a small carpet, spread out in the same manner as those which we spread with us, in order to kneel upon when we pray. A young man of a pleasant countenance was seated upon this carpet, and recited with great attention from the koran, which lay before him upon a small desk. Astonished and delighted at this sight, I endeavoured to account how it happened that he was the only person alive in a town where every one else was petrified, and I did not doubt but that there was something very extraordinary in this.

As the door was scarcely shut, I entered, and placing myself before the niche, I made the following prayer, aloud:—

God be praised for having granted us so prosperous a voyage: may he continue to favour us with his protection till we arrive in our own country. Listen to me, O Lord, and grant my prayer."

The young man then cast his eyes upon me, and said, "I entreat you, lady, to tell me who you are, and what has brought you to this desolate town? I will inform you, in return, who I am, what has happened to me, and for what reason the inhabitants of this town are reduced to the condition you have seen; and now it happens, also, that I alone am safe, and have escaped so dreadful a disaster."

I related to him, in a few words, whence I came, what had induced me to make this voyage, and how I had fortunately arrived at this port after twenty days' sail. Having said this, I entreated him, in his turn, to fulfil the promise he had made me, and I remarked to him how much I had been struck by the frightful desolation which I had observed in all the places through which I had passed.

"My dear lady," then replied the young man, "have a moment's patience."

At these words, he shut the koran, put it into a rich case, and laid it in the niche. I took this opportunity to observe him very accurately, and I perceived so much grace and beauty in his countenance that I felt an emotion to which I had hitherto been a stranger. He made me sit down near him, and before he began his relation I could not refrain from saying to him, with an air by which he might discover the sentiments he had inspired, "It is impossible for any one to wait with more impatience than I do for the explanation of the many surprising things which have struck my sight from the first step I set in this town, nor can my curiosity too soon be gratified; speak, I conjure thee, dear object of my soul; tell me by what miracle thou alone art alive, amidst so many persons who seem to have died in such an uncommon manner."

"You have made it very apparent, madam, by the prayer you have addressed to Him," replied the young man, "that you are not ignorant of the true God. I am now about to inform you of a remarkable instance of his greatness and power.—You must know that this city was the capital of a very powerful kingdom, of the same name and title as that of the king, my father. This prince, as well as all his court, the inhabitants of this city, and also all his other subjects, were of the religion of Magi, idolaters of fire, and of Nardoun, the ancient king of the giants, who rebelled against God.

"Although both my father and mother were idolaters, I had in my infancy the good fortune to have a governess, or nurse, who was of the true religion; she was thoroughly acquainted with the koran, could repeat it by heart, and explain it perfectly well. "My prince," she would often say to me, "there is only one true God; take care how you acknowledge and adore any other." She taught me also to read the Arabic language, and the book which she gave me for this purpose was the koran. I was no sooner capable of understanding it than she explained to me all the particular points of that admirable book; she made me enter thoroughly into the spirit of it, entirely unknown to my father and every one besides. She at length died; but it was not before she had given me all the instruction that was necessary to convince me most completely of the truths of the Mussulman religion. After her death, I remained constant and firm in the sentiments and opinions she had instilled into me, and I felt an utter abhorrence for the god Nardoun and the worship of fire.

"About three years and a few months ago, a voice like thunder was heard on a sudden all over the town, so very distinctly that no one lost a single word. The words were these:—'INHABITANTS, ABANDON THE WORSHIP OF NARDOUN AND OF FIRE, AND ADORE THE ONLY GOD, WHO SHOWS MERCY.'

"The same voice was heard three successive years, yet not one person was converted. On the last day of the third year, between three and four o'clock in the morning, every one of the inhabitants were in an instant transformed into stones, each remaining in the very posture and spot he then happened to be in. The king, my father, experienced the same fate; he was changed to a black stone, as you might see in a part of the palace; and the queen, my mother, experienced a similar transformation.

"I am the only person on whom God has not inflicted this terrible punishment. From this moment I have continued to serve him with greater zeal than ever, and I am well persuaded, my dear lady, that he has sent you for my consolation and comfort. How much do I thank him for his great mercies; for I own to you that this solitude had become quite distressing."

This narrative, and more particularly the latter part, still further increased my attachment to the prince. "I can no longer doubt," I said to him, "that Providence has conducted me to your country for the express purpose of enabling you to leave so melancholy a spot. The vessel in which I arrived may lead you to conclude that I am of some consequence in Bagdad, where I have

left things of equal value with those I have brought. I can venture to offer you a safe retreat there till the powerful Commander of the Faithful, the vicar of our great Prophet, whom you are not ignorant of, shall have bestowed upon you all the honours you so well deserve. This illustrious prince resides at Bagdad; and, be assured, he will no sooner be informed of your arrival in his capital than you will acknowledge you have not sought his assistance in vain. It is not possible for you to live any longer in a city, where every object is become insupportable to you. My vessel is at your service, and you may dispose of it at your pleasure." He joyfully accepted the offer, and we passed the rest of the night in talking of our voyage.

As soon as the morning appeared, we departed from the palace, and went towards the harbour, where we found my sisters, the captain, and my slaves, all in great pain about my safety. After introducing my sisters to the prince, I informed them of the reason that had prevented my return on the preceding day; I related to them also my adventures, how I met the young prince, his history, and the cause of the entire desolation which reigned over the whole of so beautiful a city.

The sailors were many days engaged in landing the merchandize which I had brought with me, and in shipping in the place of it the most valuable and precious things we could find in the palace, in silver, in gold, and in jewels. We left behind us all the furniture, and a multitude of articles worked in gold, because we had no room to stow them in. Many vessels would have been necessary to have transported to Bagdad all the riches we saw in this city.

After we had filled the ship with whatever we wished to carry away, we set sail, with the wind as favourable as we could wish, having first taken in such a supply of provisions and water as we judged sufficient for our voyage. Of the former, indeed, there yet remained a considerable quantity which we had brought from Bagdad.

From the commencement of our voyage, the young prince, my sisters, and myself, entertained ourselves very agreeably every day; but alas! this harmony and good humour did not last long. My sisters became jealous of the good understanding which they observed to subsist between the prince and myself, and, in a malicious manner, asked me what I intended to do with him when we arrived at Bagdad. I was very well aware that they put this question to me only for the purpose of discovering my sentiments. I therefore pretended to give the matter a pleasant turn, and jocosely told them I intended to make him my husband; then, turning directly to the prince, I said to him, "I entreat you, my prince, to accede to my plan. As soon as we arrive at Bagdad, it is my intention to offer you my person, as the humblest of your slaves, to render you every service in my power, and to acknowledge you as absolute master over my actions."

"Madam," replied the prince, "I know not whether you say this in joke or not; but, with respect to myself, I declare most seriously, before these ladies, your sisters, that I accept from this instant the offer you have now made me, most willingly; not indeed to consider you in the light of my slave, but as my mistress and wife, and I here claim no power whatever over your actions." At this speech, my sisters instantly changed colour, and from this moment I observed that they no longer continued to have the same regard for me as before.

We had already reached the Persian Gulf, and were very near Balsora, where, if the wind proved strong and favourable, I hoped to arrive on the following day. But in the night, while I was fast asleep, my sisters seized that opportunity to throw me into the sea; they treated the prince also in the same manner, and he was unfortunately drowned. For some moments I supported myself on the surface of the water, and by good fortune, or rather by a miracle,

I at length felt the bottom. I advanced forward towards something that appeared very black, and which, as well as the obscurity would suffer me to distinguish, I conjectured to be land. I happily gained the shore, and when the day appeared, I found that I was in a small desert island, about twenty miles from the town of Balsora. I immediately dried my clothes in the sun, and in walking about, I discovered many sorts of fruit, and also a spring of fresh water. From these circumstances, I had great hopes of being able to preserve my life.

I then went and reposed myself in the shade, and while there, I observed a very large and long serpent with wings. It advanced towards me, first moving on one side and then on the other, with its tongue hanging out of its mouth. From this I conjectured it had received some injury. I immediately got up, and perceived that it was pursued by another serpent still larger, who held it fast by the end of its tail, and was endeavouring to devour it. This excited my compassion; and instead of running away, I had the courage to take up a stone, which I accidentally found near me; and letting it fall with all my strength on the larger serpent, I struck it on its head, and crushed it to pieces. The other, finding itself at liberty, immediately opened its wings and flew away. I continued to look for some time at this very extraordinary animal; but having lost sight of it, I again seated myself in the shade in another spot, and fell asleep.

Conceive what was my astonishment, when I awoke, to find close by my side a black woman, of a lively and agreeable expression of countenance, holding by a chain two dogs of the same colour. I immediately sat up, and asked her who she was. "I am," she replied, "that serpent, which you delivered not long since from its most cruel enemy. I imagined I could not better repay the important services you had rendered me, than by what I have just now performed. I was well acquainted with the treachery of your sisters, and, to gratify your revenge, as soon as I was delivered by your generous assistance, I collected together a great many of my companions, who are fairies, like myself: we immediately transported all the lading of your vessel to your warehouses at Bagdad; and we then sunk the ship. These two black dogs, which you see here, are your sisters; I have given them that form; but this punishment will not be sufficient, and I wish you to treat them in the manner I am going to point out."

At this instant the fairy took both the two black dogs and myself in her arms, and transported us to Bagdad, where I perceived, laid up in my warehouse, all the riches with which my vessel had been laden. Before the fairy left me she delivered to me the two black dogs, and spoke as follows: "I command you by order of Him who can subvert the seas, and under the penalty of being changed to a similar animal, to inflict upon each of your sisters, every night, one hundred lashes with a whip; as a punishment for the crime they have been guilty of towards you and the young prince, whom they have drowned." I felt myself obliged to promise to execute what she required.

Every evening from that instant I have, though unwillingly, treated them in the manner your majesty was a witness to last night. I endeavour to express to them by my tears, with what repugnance and grief I fulfil my cruel duty; and in all this you may plainly perceive, that I am rather to be pitied than blamed. If there be anything else, that regards me, and of which you may wish to be informed, my sister Azzine, by the recital of her history, will afford you every explanation.

The caliph, after having listened with admiration and astonishment to the adventures of Zobeide, desired his grand vizier Giafar to request the agreeable

Aminé to explain by what means she became so covered with scars. The latter, addressing herself to the caliph, began her history in the following manner.

THE HISTORY OF AMINÉ.

COMMANDER of the Faithful, that I may not repeat those things which your majesty has already been informed of by my sister, I will only mention, that my mother, having taken a house to pass her widowhood in private, first bestowed me in marriage on the heir of one of the richest men in this city.

I had not been married quite a year, before my husband died. I thus became a widow, and was in possession of all his property, which amounted to above ninety thousand sequins. The interest only of this sum would have been quite sufficient for me to have passed the remainder of my life with ease and reputation. In the mean time, as soon as the first six months of my mourning was over, I ordered ten different dresses to be made up, which were so very magnificent that each cost me a thousand sequins; and when my year of mourning was finished, I began to wear them.

I was one day quite alone, and employed about my domestic affairs, when they came and told me that a lady wanted to speak with me. I desired them to let her come in. She appeared to be very far advanced in years. On her entrance she saluted me, by kissing the ground, and then rising on her knees, she said, "I entreat you, my good lady, to excuse the liberty which I have taken in coming to importune you; but the assurance I have received of your charitable disposition is the cause of my boldness. I must inform you, most honourable lady, that I have an orphan daughter, who is to be married to-day: we are both strangers, and have not the least knowledge of any one in this city. This causes us great anxiety and confusion, because we wish that the numerous family with which we are going to be connected, should believe that we are not altogether unknown, but are of some respectability and credit. It is for this reason, most charitable lady, that you would lay us under an infinite obligation, if you would honour the nuptials with your presence. If therefore you grant us this favour, our own countrywomen will know that we are not looked upon here as poor wretches, when they shall be informed that a person of your rank has had the condescension to do us so great an honour. But if, alas! you reject our petition, how great will our mortification be; because we know not to whom else to address ourselves."

The poor lady was in tears during the whole of this speech, which very much excited my compassion. "My good mother," replied I, "do not afflict yourself any more; I shall be very happy to oblige you, in the way you wish. Tell me whither I must come; I only wish for time sufficient to dress myself properly for such an occasion." The old lady was so overjoyed at this answer, that she would have fallen at my feet and kissed them, if I had not prevented her. "My dear good lady," she cried in getting up, "God will recompense you for the goodness you have shown to those, who will always consider themselves as your servants; he will make your bosom overflow with joy from the reflection of your having been the cause of so much good to us. It is not necessary for you to have the trouble of remembering the address, but only that you will have the goodness to go with me in the evening at the time I shall come and call for you. Adieu, madam," added she, "till I have the honour of seeing you again."

She had no sooner left me, than I went and took the dress I liked best; also a necklace of large pearls, a pair of bracelets, some rings both for the fingers

and ears, of the finest and most brilliant diamonds; for I, somehow or other, seemed to have a presentiment of what would happen to me.

The evening began to close, when the old lady, with a countenance that expressed great joy, arrived at my house. She kissed my hand, and said, "The parents and relations of my son-in-law are all arrived; and they are ladies of the first consequence in this city. You may now come, whenever it is agreeable to you; and I am ready to serve you as a guide. We immediately set out, and she walked before to show me the way. I followed, together with a great number of my female slaves, all properly dressed for the occasion. Having come into a wide street, that had been fresh swept and watered, we stopped at a large door, lighted by a lamp, by the help of which I could distinguish this inscription, written over the door, in letters of gold: "THIS IS THE CONTINUAL ABODE OF PLEASURES AND OF JOY." The old lady knocked, and the door instantly opened.

They conducted me through a court into a large hall, where I was received by a young lady of incomparable beauty. She came immediately towards me; and after embracing me, she made me sit next to her on a sofa, over which there was a sort of throne or canopy, formed of precious wood enriched with diamonds. "You have come here, madam," she said to me, "to assist at some nuptials; but I trust they will belong to different persons from those which you expect. I have a brother, who is one of the best-made and accomplished of men. He is so charmed with the description which he has heard of your beauty, that his fate absolutely depends upon you; and he will be most unfortunate and wretched if you do not take pity upon him. He is well acquainted with the situation you hold in the world, and I can assure you that he is not unworthy of your alliance. If my prayers, madam, can have any weight with you, I readily join them to his, and entreat you not to reject the offer which he makes you, of receiving him for your husband."

Since the death of my husband, the idea of marrying again never came into my head; but I did not possess sufficient resolution to refuse so beautiful a person. I had no sooner given my assent to this by my silence, accompanied by a blush, which suffused my cheek, than the young lady clapped her hands; a young man immediately entered with so majestic an air, and so much apparent grace, that I thought myself fortunate in having made so excellent a conquest. He seated himself near me; and I discovered, by the conversation that passed between us, that his merit was still greater than his sister had led me to believe.

When she found that we were well satisfied with each other, she clapped her hands a second time, and the *cadi* immediately entered, who made a contract for our marriage, signed it, and had it also witnessed by four persons, whom he brought with him for that purpose. There was one condition, and it was the only one my new husband required of me; and this was, that I should neither see nor speak to any other man than himself. He then took an oath, that if I preserved these terms, I should have every reason to be satisfied with him. Our marriage was then concluded, and thus I became a principal person concerned, when I only thought of being a spectator and a guest.

About a month after our marriage, having occasion to purchase some silk stuff, I asked leave of my husband to go out, and execute this commission. This he immediately granted; and I took with me, by way of companion, the old woman, of whom I have already spoken, and who lived in the house, and two of my female slaves.

When we had come to that street in which the merchants reside, the old woman said to me, "Since you are come, my good mistress, to look for silk stuff, I will take you to a young merchant here, with whom I am very well acquainted; he has some of every sort; and without, therefore, fatiguing your-

self by running from shop to shop, I assure you, that at his you will find whatever you may want." I suffered her to conduct me; and we entered a shop, where there was a merchant, who was a well-made young man. I sat down, and desired him, by means of the old woman, to show me some of the most beautiful silk stuffs that he had. The old woman wished me to make the request myself, but I told her, that one of the conditions of our marriage was not to speak to any man besides my husband; and that I did not intend to infringe it.

The merchant showed me a variety of sorts: one of which pleased me more than the rest, and I desired her to ask the price of it. In answer to her, he said, "I will sell it to her for neither silver nor gold; but I will make her a present of it, if she will have the condescension to permit me to kiss her cheek." I desired the old woman to tell him, that his proposal was a very rude and impertinent one. But instead of doing what I ordered, she told me she thought that what the merchant required was a matter of no importance; that he did not ask me to speak, but I had only to present my cheek to him, which was merely the business of a moment. My desire to possess the silk was so great, I was foolish enough to follow the old woman's advice. She and my slaves immediately stood up before me, that no person might observe me; I then drew aside my veil, when instead of kissing me, the merchant gave me such a bite, that the blood flowed from the wound.

The surprise and pain were so great, that I fainted and fell down. I remained for so great a length of time in that state, that it afforded the merchant sufficient opportunity to shut up his shop, and make his escape. When I returned to my senses, I perceived my cheek entirely covered with blood. The old lady and my women had the precaution, at the first instant, to cover my face with my veil, so that when the people collected to see what was the matter, they could perceive nothing, but believed it to be only a sudden weakness that had seized me.

The old woman who accompanied me, and who was extremely chagrined at the accident which had happened, endeavoured nevertheless to give me courage. "Indeed, my good mistress," she said to me, "I sincerely ask your pardon. I am the only cause of this misfortune. I carried you to this merchant, because he was my countryman, and I could never have thought he would have been guilty of so great a wickedness; but do not afflict yourself; let us lose no time in returning to your house; I will give you a remedy, which shall make so perfect a cure in three days, that not the least possible mark or scar shall remain." My fainting had rendered me so weak that I could scarcely walk; I, however, contrived to get home, but on entering my chamber I again fainted. In the mean time, the old woman applied her remedy, and I recovered from the fit, and went immediately to bed.

Night came, and my husband arrived. He perceived that my head was very much wrapped up, and asked me the reason of it. I told him that I had a bad head-ache, which I hoped would have satisfied him; but he took up a taper, and observing that I had a wound on my cheek, "How happened this?" he cried. Now, although I was not guilty of a very great fault, I could not make up my mind to discover the whole affair to him; to enter also into this detail, seemed to me not the most decorous. I told him that as I was going to purchase the silk I wanted, and which he had given me permission to do, a porter with a bundle of wood had passed so close to me, at the corner of a very narrow street, that one of the sticks had grazed my cheek; but that it was a mere trifle.

At this, my husband was excessively enraged. "This act," he cried, "shall not remain unpunished. I will to-morrow give an order to the officer of the police to arrest all these brutes of porters, and hang every one of them." Fearful of occasioning the death of so many innocent people, "Take care, my lord."

I cried, "how you commit such an act of injustice: I should be very sorry to be the cause of your doing it; and if I were to be guilty of such a crime, I should think myself unworthy of pardon." "Tell me then sincerely," he added, "what am I to think of your wound."

I then related to him, that it had been done by a seller of brooms upon his ass, who as he came behind me, had his head turned on one side, and the ass pushed by me so violently, that I fell down, and cut my cheek against a piece of glass. "This being the fact," added my husband, "the sun shall not have risen to-morrow morning before the grand vizier Giafar shall be informed of this insolence. He shall order the death of every broom-seller in the city." "In the name of God, my husband," I cried, interrupting him, "I entreat you to pardon them, they are not culpable." "What then, madam," said he, "am I to believe? Speak, I insist on hearing the strict truth from your lips." "My lord," I replied, "I was seized with a giddiness and fell down; this is the fact."

My husband lost all patience at these words. "I have already," he cried, "listened too long to your falsehoods;" and in saying this, he clapped his hands, and three slaves immediately came in. "Drag her from the bed," he exclaimed, "and lay her at length in the middle of the chamber." This order was instantly executed by the slaves; one of whom held me by the head, another by the feet, and he commanded a third to fetch a sabre. As soon as my husband saw him return with it, "Strike," he cried; "cut her body in two, and throw it into the Tigris, and let it become food for its fish. This is the punishment I inflict on those upon whom I have bestowed my affections, and who cannot preserve their fidelity to me." As he observed that the slave rather hesitated in his obedience, "Strike," he again cried; "why do you stop? what do you wait for?"

"Madam," said the slave to me, "almost the last moment of your existence is at hand; recollect, if there be anything that you wish to dispose of before your death." I requested permission to speak a few words. This was granted me; I then raised my head, and casting a tender look at my husband, I said, "To what a state, alas! am I reduced! Must I then die in the very prime of my life?" I wished to proceed, but my tears and sighs choked my utterance. — This, however, had no effect on my husband. On the contrary, he began to use reproaches so bitter, that it would have been useless for me to answer him. I then had recourse to prayers; but he heeded them not, and ordered the slave to do his duty. At this moment the old woman, who had been my husband's nurse, came in, and throwing herself at his feet, endeavoured to appease him. "My son," she cried, "as a reward for having nursed and brought you up, I conjure you to grant me her pardon. Consider, I beg, that he who slays, shall be slain; and that you will thus tarnish your reputation, and lessen yourself in the estimation of society. What will they not say of such a cruel inhuman disposition?" She pronounced these words in so affecting a manner, and accompanied them with so many tears, that they made a very strong impression on my husband.

"Well, then," said he to his nurse, "out of regard for you I will grant her life; but I am determined she shall carry some marks to make her remember her crime." Having said this, one of the slaves, by his order, gave me so many blows with a small pliant cane on my sides and bosom, that the skin and flesh were torn in every part. I remained quite senseless. After this, the same slaves, who were the agents of his rage, carried me into another house, where I was taken all possible care of by the old woman. I was obliged to keep my bed four months; at length I was cured; but all the scars which I could not prevent you from seeing yesterday, have remained there ever since. As soon as I

was able to walk about and go out, I wished to return to the house which I possessed by my first husband ; but I could only discover its situation, for my second husband, in the excess of his fury, was not satisfied with having that pulled down : he had even caused the whole street where it stood to be razed to the ground. This, no doubt, was a most unjustifiable and unheard-of revenge ; but against whom could I lodge my complaint ? Its author had taken such measures to conceal himself, that I could not discover him. Besides, if I should have found him out, I might easily conjecture from the manner in which he had treated me, that his power was almost absolute. How then dare I have complained ?

Entirely desolate, and deprived of every succour, I had recourse to my dear sister Zobeidè, who has already related her history to your majesty ; and I informed her of my misfortune. She received me with her accustomed goodness, and exhorted me to bear my afflictions with patience. "Such is the world," she said : "it deprives us either of our fortunes, our friends, or our lovers ; nay, sometimes even of all." To prove, at the same time, the truth of what she said to me, she gave me an account of the death of the young prince, which was occasioned by her two sisters' jealousy. She then informed me in what manner they had been transformed into dogs. After having, in short, given me a thousand proofs of her friendship and regard, she presented my youngest sister to me, who after the death of her mother had come to live with her.

Having returned our thanks to God for thus having again united us, we resolved for the future to live together, and never again be separate. We have for a long time continued to pass this tranquil kind of life, and as I have the whole management of the house, I take a pleasure in sometimes going out myself to purchase the provisions we may have occasion for. I went out yesterday for this purpose, and ordered them to be brought home by a porter, who proved to be possessed of some wit and humour, and we detained him in order to divert us. The three calenders arrived about the beginning of the evening, and requested us to afford them an asylum till the morning. We received them upon one express condition, which they agreed to ; and after placing them at our own table, they amused us with some music in a manner peculiar to themselves. At this particular time, we heard a knock at our gate, and we saw there were three merchants of Moussoul, of prepossessing appearance, who requested the same favour of us which the calenders had before done ; and we granted it them on the same condition, but not one of them observed their promise. Although we had the power to punish them, and with the greatest justice, we were satisfied with only requiring the recital of each of their histories : and we confined our revenge to the act of immediately dismissing them, and thus depriving them of the retreat they had requested.

The caliph Haroun Alraschid was very well satisfied with the account he thus received, and for which he was so anxious ; and he publicly expressed the pleasure and astonishment which these narratives had afforded him. When the caliph had thus satisfied his curiosity, he wished to give some proofs of his generosity and magnificence to the royal unfortunates, and also to make the three ladies feel the consequences of his bounty. Without therefore employing the intervention of his grand vizier, he himself said to Zobeidè, "Has not that fairy, madam, whom you first beheld under the form of a serpent, and who has imposed so rigorous a law upon you, given you any information where she lives ; or rather, has she not promised to see you again, and suffer the two dogs to re-assume their natural form ?"

"I ought not to have forgotten, Commander of the Faithful," replied Zobeidè, "to have informed you that the fairy put a small packet of hair into my hand ; saying at the same time that I should one day have occasion for her

presence ; and then if I only burnt two single hairs, she would instantly be with me, although she should happen to be beyond Mount Caucasus." "Where, madam," replied the caliph, "is this packet of hair?" She replied, that she had from that time always carried it about her very carefully. She then took it out of her pocket, and opening the lid of the box in which she kept it, she showed it to him. "Let us, then," cried the caliph, "make the fairy appear now ; you cannot, since I wish it, call her more opportunely."

Zobeidè having agreed to it, they brought some fire, and she directly put the contents of the packet upon it. At the same moment the whole palace shook, and the fairy, in the shape of a lady most magnificently dressed, appeared before the caliph. "Commander of the Faithful," said she to the prince, "you see me here, ready to receive your commands. The lady, who has called me here at your desire, has rendered me a very important service ; to give her a proof of my gratitude, I have punished the perfidy of her sisters by transforming them into dogs, but if your majesty desires it, I will restore them to their natural shape."

"Beautiful fairy," answered the caliph, "you cannot afford me a greater pleasure than by granting me that favour. I will then find some means of consoling them for so severe a punishment ; but in the first place I have another request to make to you in behalf of the lady, who has been so ill-treated by her husband. As you are acquainted with almost everything, I do not believe you can be ignorant of that ; and you will oblige me very much if you mention the name of the cruel wretch, who was not satisfied with executing so much cruelty towards her, but even most unjustly deprived her of all her fortune which belonged to her. I am really astonished that so criminal and inhuman an act, and one which flies in the very face of my power and authority, has never come to my knowledge."

"For the sake of obliging your majesty," replied the fairy, "I will restore the two dogs to their original form ; I will cure the lady of all her scars so perfectly, that no one shall be able to tell that she has ever been wounded ; and I will then inform you of the name of him who has treated her so ill."

The caliph instantly sent to Zobeidè's house for the two dogs ; when they were come, the fairy asked for a cupful of water, which they gave her. She pronounced some words over it, which they did not understand, and then threw some of it over Aminè and the two dogs. The latter were immediately changed into two females of most extraordinary beauty, and the scars of the former disappeared. The fairy then addressed the caliph as follows :—"I have, O Commander of the Faithful, only now to discover to you what is the name of the unknown husband, which you require. He is very nearly related to you, since indeed it is Prince Amin, your eldest son, and brother to Prince Mamoun. He, having become enamoured of this lady from the description he had heard of her beauty, made use of that pretence to get her into his power, and married her. With regard to the blows he ordered her, he is in some measure to be excused. His wife was too easily prevailed on, and the different excuses she invented were enough to make him think that she was much more criminal than she really was. This is all that I can tell you for your satisfaction." Having concluded this speech, she saluted the caliph, and disappeared.

This prince, filled with wonder and astonishment, and well satisfied at the alterations and changes that he had been the means of effecting, performed some actions, which will be eternally spoken of. He first of all called his son, Prince Amin, and told him he was acquainted with the secret of his marriage, and informed him of the cause of the wound in Aminè's cheek. The prince did not wait for his father to command him to take her again, but immediately received her.

The caliph next declared that he bestowed his heart and hand upon Zobeidè, and proposed her other three sisters to the calenders, the sons of kings, who accepted them with much joy for their wives. The caliph then assigned a most magnificent palace to each of them, in the city of Bagdad; he raised them to the first offices of the empire, and admitted them into his council.

They sent for the first cadi of Bagdad, who, with proper witnesses, drew up the forms of marriage; and the illustrious and famous caliph Haroun Alraschid, in bestowing happiness on so many persons who had experienced such incredible misfortunes, acquired a thousand benedictions.

THE HISTORY OF SINDBAD, THE SAILOR.

IN the reign of the same caliph, mentioned in the last story, namely, Haroun Alraschid, there lived in Bagdad a poor porter, who was named Hindbad. One day, during the excessive heats of summer, he was carrying a heavy load from one extremity of the city to the other, and being much fatigued by the length of way he had already come, and having still much ground to traverse, he arrived in a street where the pavement was sprinkled with rose-water, and a gentle breeze refreshed the air. Delighted with this cool and pleasant situation, he placed his load on the ground, and took his station near a large mansion. The delicious scent of aloes and frankincense, which issued from the windows, and, mixing with the rose-water, perfumed the air, together with a charming concert within, which was accompanied by the melody of the nightingales, and other birds peculiar to the climate of Bagdad, and the smell of different sorts of viands, led him to suppose that some grand feast was given there. He wished to know whose residence it was; for, not having frequent occasion to pass that way, he was unacquainted with the names of the inhabitants. To satisfy his curiosity, therefore, he approached some servants, who were standing, magnificently dressed, at the door, and inquired who was the master of that mansion. "What," replied the servant, "are you an inhabitant of Bagdad, and do not know that this is the residence of Sindbad, the sailor, that famous voyager, who has sailed over all the seas under the sun?" The porter, who had heard of the immense riches of Sindbad, could not help comparing his situation, which appeared so enviable, with his own, which was so deplorable; and distressed by the reflection, he raised his eyes to heaven, and exclaimed in a loud voice, "Almighty Creator of all things, be pleased to consider the difference that there is between Sindbad and myself; I suffer daily a thousand ills, and find the greatest difficulty to supply my wretched family with bad barley bread, whilst the fortunate Sindbad expends his riches with profusion, and enjoys every pleasure. What has he done to obtain so happy a destiny, or I to merit one so rigorous?" In saying this, he struck the ground with his foot, as if entirely given up to despair. He was still musing on his fate, when a servant came towards him from the house, and taking hold of his arm, said, "Come, follow me; my master, Sindbad, wishes to speak with you."

It may easily be imagined that Hindbad was not a little surprised at the compliment that was paid him. After the words he had uttered, he began to fear that Sindbad sent for him to reprimand him, and therefore he tried to excuse himself from going, saying that he could not leave his load in the middle of the street; but the servant assuring him that it should be taken care of, pressed him so much to go, that the porter could no longer refuse.

He led him into a spacious room, where a number of persons were seated round a table, which was covered with all kinds of delicate viands. In the principal seat was a grave and venerable personage, whose long white beard

hung down to his breast; and behind him were standing a crowd of officers and servants to wait on him. This person was Sindbad. The porter, quite confused by the number of the company, and the magnificence of the entertainment, made his obeisance with fear and trembling. Sindbad desired him to approach, and seating him at his right hand, helped him himself to the choicest dishes, and gave him some excellent wine, with which the sideboard was plentifully supplied, to drink.

Towards the end of the repast, Sindbad, perceiving that his guests had done eating, began to speak: and addressing himself to Hindbad by the title of brother, as is the custom among the Arabians, when they converse familiarly, he inquired his name and profession. "Sir," replied he, "my name is Hindbad." "I am happy to see you," said Sindbad, "and can answer for the pleasure the rest of the company also feel at your presence; but I wish to know from your own lips what it was you said just now in the street;" for Sindbad, before he went to dinner, had heard the whole of the discourse from the window, which was the reason of his sending for him. At this request, Hindbad, full of confusion, hung down his head, and replied, "Sir, I must confess to you that my fatigue had put me so out of humour, that I uttered some indiscreet words, which I entreat you to pardon me." "O!" resumed Sindbad do not imagine that I am so unjust as to have any resentment on that account. I feel for your situation, and instead of reproaching, I pity you heartily; but I must undeceive you on one point respecting myself, where you seem to be in an error. You suppose, no doubt, that the riches and comforts I enjoy have been obtained without any labour or trouble; you are mistaken. To arrive at this state, I have endured for many years the greatest mental as well as bodily sufferings that you can possibly conceive. Yes, gentlemen," continued he, addressing himself to the whole company, "I assure you that my sufferings have been of a nature so extraordinary, as would deprive the greatest miser of his love of riches. Perhaps you have heard only a confused account of my adventures in the seven voyages I have made on different seas; and as an opportunity now offers, I will, with your leave, relate the dangers I have encountered, which I think will not be uninteresting to you."

As Sindbad was going to relate his history chiefly on the porter's account, he gave orders, before he began it, to have his burden, which had been left in the street, brought in, and placed where Hindbad should wish; this done, he spoke in these words.

THE FIRST VOYAGE OF SINDBAD, THE SAILOR.

I DISSIPATED the greatest part of my paternal inheritance in the excesses of my youth; but at length seeing my folly, I became convinced that riches were not of much use when applied to such purposes as I had employed them in; and I moreover reflected that the time I spent in dissipation was of still greater value than gold, and that nothing could be more truly deplorable than poverty in old age. I recollected the words of the wise Solomon, which my father had often repeated to me, that it is better to be in the grave than poor. Feeling the truth of all these reflections, I resolved to collect the small remains of my patrimony, and to sell my goods by auction. I then formed connexions with some merchants, who had negotiations by sea, and consulted those who appeared best able to give me advice. In short, I determined to employ to some profit the small sum I had remaining, and no sooner was this resolution formed, than I put it into execution. I repaired to Balsora, where I embarked with several merchants, in a vessel which had been equipped at our united expense.

We set sail, and steered towards the East Indies by the Persian Gulf, which

is formed by the coast of Arabia Felix on the right, and by that of Persia on the left, and is commonly supposed to be seventy leagues in breadth, in the widest part; beyond this gulf, the Western Sea, or Indian Ocean, is very spacious, and is bounded by the coast of Abyssinia, extending in length four thousand five hundred leagues to the island of Vakvak. I was at first rather incommoded with what is termed sea-sickness, but I soon recovered my health, and from that period I have never been subject to that malady. In the course of our voyage we touched at several islands, and sold or exchanged our merchandise. One day, when in full sail, we were unexpectedly becalmed before a small island appearing just above the water, and which, from its verdure, resembled a beautiful meadow. The captain ordered the sails to be lowered, and gave permission to those who wished it, to go ashore, of which number I formed one. But during the time that we were regaling ourselves with eating and drinking, by way of relaxation from the fatigues we had endured at sea, the island suddenly trembled, and we felt a severe shock.

They who were in the ship perceived the earthquake in the island, and immediately called to us to re-embark as soon as possible, or we should all perish, for what we supposed to be an island was no more than the back of a whale. The most active of the party jumped into the boat, whilst others threw themselves into the water to swim to the ship; as for me, I was still on the island, or more properly speaking on the whale, when it plunged into the sea, and I had only time to seize hold of a piece of wood, which had been brought to make a fire with. Meantime the captain, willing to avail himself of a fair breeze which had sprung up, set sail with those who had reached his vessel, and left me to the mercy of the waves. I remained in this situation the whole of that day and the following night; and on the return of morning, I had neither strength nor hope left, when a breaker happily dashed me on an island. The shore was high and steep, and I should have found great difficulty in landing, had not some roots of trees, which fortune seemed to have furnished for my preservation, assisted me. I threw myself on the ground, where I continued more than half dead, till the sun arose.

Although I was extremely enfeebled by the fatigues I had undergone, I tried to creep about in search of some herb or fruit that might satisfy my hunger. I found some, and had also the good luck to meet with a stream of excellent water, which contributed not a little to my recovery. Having in a great measure regained my strength, I began to explore the island, and entered a beautiful plain, where I perceived at some distance a horse that was grazing. I bent my steps that way, trembling between fear and joy, for I could not ascertain whether I was advancing to safety or perdition. I remarked, as I approached, that it was a mare tied to a stake; her beauty attracted my attention; but whilst I was admiring her, I heard a voice under ground of a man, who shortly after appeared, and coming to me, asked me who I was. I related my adventure to him; after which he took me by the hand and led me into a cave, where there were some other persons, who were not less astonished to see me than I was to find them there.

I ate some food which they offered me; and having asked them what they did in a place which appeared so barren, they replied, that they were grooms to King Mihragè, who was the sovereign of that isle; and that they came every year about that time with some mares belonging to the king, for the purpose of having a breed between them and a sea-horse, which came on shore at that spot. They tied the mares in that manner, because they were obliged almost immediately, by their cries, to drive back the sea-horse, otherwise he began to tear them in pieces. As soon as the mares were with foal, they carried them back, and these colts were called sea-colts, and set apart for the king's

use. To-morrow, they added, was the day fixed for their departure, and if I had been one day later I must certainly have perished, because they lived so far off that it was impossible to reach their habitations without a guide.

Whilst they were talking to me, the horse rose out of the sea as they had described, and immediately attacked the mares. He would, then, have torn them to pieces, but the grooms began to make such a noise that he let go his prey, and again plunged into the ocean.

The following day they returned to the capital of the island with the mares, whither I accompanied them. On our arrival, King Mihragè, to whom I was presented, asked me who I was, and by what chance I had reached his dominions; and when I had satisfied his curiosity, he expressed pity at my misfortune. At the same time, he gave orders that I should be taken care of, and have everything I might want. These orders were executed in a manner that proved the king's generosity, as well as the exactness of his officers.

As I was a merchant, I associated with persons of my own profession. I sought, in particular, such as were foreigners, as much to hear some intelligence of Bagdad, as with the hope of meeting with some one whom I could return with; for the capital of King Mihragè is situated on the sea-coast, and has a beautiful port, where vessels from all parts of the world daily arrive. I also sought the society of the Indian sages, and found great pleasure in their conversation; this, however, did not prevent me from attending at court very regularly, nor from conversing with the governors of provinces, and some less powerful kings, tributaries of Mihragè, who were about his person. They asked me a thousand questions about my country; and I, on my part, was not less inquisitive about the laws and customs of their different states, or whatever appeared to merit my curiosity.

In the dominions of King Mihragè there is an island called Cassel. I had been told, that in that island there was heard every night the sound of cymbals, which had given rise to the sailors' opinion, that Degial (the Mahometan Antichrist), had chosen that spot for his residence. I felt a great desire to witness these wonders, and during my voyage I saw some fish of one and two hundred cubits in length, which occasion much fear, but do no harm; they are so timid that they are frightened away by beating on a board. I remarked, also, some other fish that were not above a cubit long, and whose heads resembled that of an owl.

After I returned, as I was standing one day near the port, I saw a ship come towards the land; when they had cast anchor, they began to unload its goods, and the merchants, to whom they belonged, took them away to their warehouses. Happening to cast my eyes on some of the packages, I saw my name written, and, having attentively examined them, I concluded them to be those which I had embarked in the ship in which I left Balsora. I also recollected the captain; but as I was persuaded that he thought me dead, I went up to him, and asked him to whom those parcels belonged. "I had on board with me," replied he, "a merchant of Bagdad, named Sindbad; one day, when we were near an island, at least such it appeared to be, he, with some other passengers, went ashore on this supposed island, which was no other than an enormous whale, that had fallen asleep on the surface of the water. The fish no sooner felt the heat of the fire they had lighted on its back, to cook their provisions, than it began to move, and flounce about in the sea. The greatest part of the persons who were on it were drowned, and the unfortunate Sindbad was one of the number. These parcels belonged to him, and I have resolved to sell them, that, if I meet with any of his family, I may be able to return them the profit I shall have made of the principal." "Captain," said I, then, "I am that Sindbad, whom you supposed dead, but who is still alive, and these parcels are my property and merchandise."

When the captain of the vessel heard me speak thus, he exclaimed, "Great God, whom shall I trust? There is no longer truth in man. I with my own eyes saw Sindbad perish; the passengers I had on board were also witnesses of it; and you have that assurance to say, that you are the same Sindbad? what audacity! At first sight you appeared a man of probity and honour, yet you assert an impious falsity to possess yourself of some merchandise which does not belong to you." "Have patience," replied I, "and have the goodness to listen to what I have to say." "Well," said he, "what can you have to say; speak, and I will attend." I then related in what manner I had been saved, and by what accident I had met with King Mihragè's groom, who had brought me to his court.

He was rather staggered at my discourse, but was soon convinced that I was not an impostor; for some people arriving from his ship knew me, and began to congratulate me on my fortunate escape. At last, he recollected me himself, and embracing me, "Heaven be praised," said he, "that you have thus happily avoided so great a danger; I cannot express the pleasure I feel on the occasion. Here are your goods, take them, for they are yours, and do with them as you like." I thanked him, and praised his honourable conduct, and by way of recompense, I begged him to accept part of the merchandise, but that he refused.

I selected the most precious and valuable things in my bales, as presents for King Mihragè. As this prince had been informed of my misfortunes, he asked me where I had obtained such rare curiosities. I related to him the manner in which I had recovered my property, and he had the complaisance to express his joy on the occasion; he accepted my presents, and gave me others of far greater value. After that, I took my leave of him, and re-embarked in the same vessel, having first exchanged what merchandise remained with that of the country, which consisted of aloes and sandal wood, camphor, nutmegs, cloves, pepper, and ginger. We touched at several islands, and at last landed at Balsora, from whence I came here, having realized about a hundred thousand sequins. I returned to my family, and was received by them with the joy which a true and sincere friendship inspires. I purchased slaves of each sex, and bought a magnificent house and grounds. I thus established myself, determined to forget the disagreeable things I had endured, and to enjoy the pleasures of life.

Sindbad here ceased, and ordered the musicians to go on with their concert, which he had interrupted by the recital of his history. The company continued to eat and drink till night approached, and when it was time to retire, Sindbad ordered a purse, containing a hundred sequins, to be brought him, and giving it to the porter, "Take this, Hindbad," said he, "return to your home, and come again to-morrow, to hear the continuation of my adventures." The porter retired quite confused with the honour conferred on him, and the present he had received. The account he gave of this occurrence to his wife and children rejoiced them very much, and they did not fail to return thanks to Providence for the bounties bestowed by the means of Sindbad.

Hindbad dressed himself in his best clothes on the following day, and returned to the house of his liberal patron, who received him with smiling looks, and a friendly air. As soon as the guests were all arrived, the table was served, and they sat down to eat. When the repast was finished, Sindbad thus addressed his guests. "Gentlemen, I request you to have the complaisance to listen to me, while I relate the adventures of my second voyage. They are more worthy of your attention than were those of my first." The company was silent, and Sindbad began as follows:

THE SECOND VOYAGE OF SINDBAD, THE SAILOR.

I HAD resolved, after my first voyage, to pass the rest of my days in tranquillity at Bagdad, as I had the honour to tell you yesterday. But I soon grew weary of an idle life; the desire of seeing foreign countries, and carrying on some negotiation by sea, returned: I bought some merchandise, which I thought likely to answer in the traffic I meditated: and I set off a second time with some merchants, upon whose probity I could rely. We embarked in a good vessel, and having recommended ourselves to the care of the Almighty, we began our voyage.

We went from island to island, and made some very advantageous exchanges. One day we landed on one, which was covered with a variety of fruit-trees, but so wild, that we could not discover any habitation, or the trace of a human being. We walked in the meadows, and along the brooks that watered them, and whilst some of my companions were amusing themselves with gathering fruits and flowers, I took out some of the wine and provisions I had brought with me, and seated myself by a little stream under some trees, which afforded a delightful shade. I made a good meal of what I had with me, and having satisfied my hunger, sleep gradually stole over my senses. I cannot say how long I slept, but when I awoke, the ship was no longer in view. I was much surprised at this circumstance, and got up to look out for my companions, but they were all gone; and I could only perceive the vessel in full sail, at such a distance that I soon lost sight of it.

You may easily imagine the reflections that occurred to me in this dismal state. I thought I should have died with grief; I groaned and cried aloud; I beat my head, and threw myself on the ground, where I remained a long time, overwhelmed with a variety of thoughts, each more distressing than the other: I reproached myself a thousand times for my folly in not being contented with my first voyage, which ought to have satisfied my desire of seeking adventures; but all my regrets were of no avail, and my repentance came too late. At length I resigned myself to the will of Heaven; and not knowing what would become of me, I ascended a high tree, from whence I looked on all sides, to see if I could not discover some object to inspire me with hope. Casting my eyes towards the sea, I could discern only the water and sky; but perceiving on the land side something white, I descended from the tree, and taking with me the remainder of my provisions, I walked towards the object, which was so distant that at first I could not distinguish what it was. As I approached, I perceived it to be a white ball of a prodigious size, and when I got near enough to touch it, I found it was soft. I walked round it to find whether there was an opening, but could find none: and it appeared so even that it was impossible to get up it. The circumference might be about fifty paces.

The sun was then near setting; the air grew suddenly dark, as if obscured by a thick cloud. I was surprised at this change, but much more so, when I perceived it to be occasioned by a bird of a most extraordinary size, which was flying towards me. I recollected having heard sailors speak of a bird called a roc; and I conceived that the great white ball which had drawn my attention, must be the egg of this bird. I was not mistaken, for shortly after it alighted on it, and placed itself as if to sit upon it. When I saw it coming I drew near to the egg, so that I had one of the claws of the bird just before me; this claw was as big as the trunk of a large tree. I tied myself to it with the linen of my turban, in hopes that the roc, when it took its flight the next morning, would carry me with it out of that desert island. My project succeeded, for at the



SINDBAD IN THE VALLEY OF DIAMONDS.

break of day the roc flew away, and carried me to such a height that I could not distinguish the earth; then it descended with such rapidity, that I almost lost my senses. When the roc had alighted, I quickly untied the knot that confined me to its foot, and had scarcely loosed myself when it darted on a serpent of an immeasurable length, and seizing it in its beak, flew away.

The place in which the roc left me was a very deep valley, surrounded on all sides with mountains of such a height, that the tops of them were lost in the clouds, and so steep that there was no possibility of climbing them. This was a fresh embarrassment; for I had no reason to be satisfied with my change of situation, when I compared it with the island I had left.

In walking along this valley, I remarked that it was strewed with diamonds, some of which were of an astonishing size. I amused myself for some time in examining them, but soon perceived from afar some objects which destroyed my pleasure, and created in me great fear; these were a great number of serpents, so long and large that the smallest of them would have swallowed an elephant with ease. They hid themselves in caves during the day on account of the roc, their mortal enemy, and only came out when it was dark. I passed the day in walking about the valley, resting myself occasionally where an opportunity offered, and when the sun set I retired into a small cave, where I thought I should be in safety. I closed the entrance, which was low and narrow, with a stone large enough to ensure me from the serpents, but which admitted a little light. I supped on part of my provisions, but the hissing of the serpents, which now began to make their appearance, caused me such terror, that I could not sleep the whole night. At day-break the serpents retired; I left my cave trembling, and may truly say that I walked a long time upon diamonds, without feeling any desire to touch them. At last I sat down, and notwithstanding my agitation, for I had not closed my eyes during the whole night, I fell asleep, after having made another meal on my provisions. I had scarcely begun to doze, when something tumbling near me, with a great noise, awoke me. It was a large piece of fresh meat, and at the same moment I saw a number of them rolling down the rocks from above.

I had always supposed the account which I had heard related, by seamen and others, of the valley of diamonds, and of the means by which merchants procured them, to be fictitious: I now knew it to be true. The method is this: the merchants go to the mountains, which surround the valley, about the time that the eagles hatch their young. They cut large pieces of meat, and throw them into the valley; and the diamonds on which they fall stick to them. The eagles, which are larger and stronger in that country than in any other, seize these pieces of meat, to carry to their young at the top of the rocks. The merchants then run to their nests, and by various noises oblige the eagles to retreat; and then take the diamonds that have stuck to the pieces of meat. This is the method they employ to procure the diamonds out of the valley, which is inaccessible on every side. I had supposed it impossible ever to leave this valley, and began to look on it as my tomb; but on seeing this I changed my opinion, and turned my thoughts to the preservation of my life. I began by collecting the largest diamonds I could find, and with them filled my leather bag in which I had carried my provisions. I then took one of the largest pieces of meat, and tied it tight round me with the linen of my turban; in this state I laid myself on the ground, having first fastened on my leather bag in a secure manner.

I had not been long in this situation, before the eagles began to descend, and each seized a piece of meat, with which it flew away. One of the strongest having darted on the piece to which I was attached, carried me up with it to its nest. The merchants then began their cries to frighten away the eagles, and

when they had obliged them to quit their prey, one of them approached me, but was much surprised and alarmed on seeing me. He soon, however, recovered from his fear, and instead of inquiring by what means I came there, began to quarrel with me for trespassing on what he called his property. "You will speak to me with pity instead of anger," said I, "when you learn by what means I reached this place. Console yourself; for I have diamonds for you as well as for myself, which are more valuable than those of all the other merchants added together; I have myself chosen some of the finest at the bottom of the valley, and have them in this bag." On saying this, I showed it to him. I had scarcely finished speaking, when the other merchants perceiving me, flocked round me with great astonishment, which I increased not a little by the recital of my history. They were less surprised at the stratagem I had conceived to save myself, than at my courage in attempting to put it in execution.

They conducted me to the place where they lived together; and on seeing my diamonds they all expressed their admiration, and declared they had never seen any to equal them in size or quality. I entreated the merchant to whom the nest into which I had been transported belonged, for each merchant has his own; I entreated him, I say, to choose for himself as many as he pleased. He contented himself with taking only one, and that too of the smallest size; and as I pressed him to take more, without fear of depriving me, "No," replied he, "I am very well satisfied with this, which is sufficiently valuable to spare me the trouble of making any more voyages to complete my little fortune."

I passed the night with these merchants, to whom I recounted my history a second time, for the satisfaction of those who had not heard it before. I could scarcely moderate my joy, when I reflected on the perils I had gone through; it appeared as if my present state was but a dream, and I could not believe that I had nothing more to fear.

The merchants had been for some days in that spot, and as they now appeared to be contented with the diamonds they had collected, we set off the following day altogether, and travelled over high mountains, which were infested by prodigious serpents; but we had the good fortune to escape them. We reached the nearest port in safety, and from thence embarked for the isle of Roha, which produces the tree whence camphor is extracted; a tree so large and thick that a hundred men may be shaded by it with ease.—The juice of which the camphor is formed, runs out at a wound made at the top of the tree, and is received in a vessel, where it remains till it acquires a proper consistence, and becomes what is called camphor. The juice being thus extracted, the tree withers and dies.

The rhinoceros is a native of this island: it is a smaller animal than the elephant, yet larger than the buffalo. It has a horn on the nose, about a cubit in length; this horn is solid, and cut through the middle from one extremity to the other, and on it are several white lines, which represent the figure of a man. The rhinoceros fights with the elephant, and piercing him in his belly with his horn, carries him off on his head; but as the fat and blood of the elephant run down on his eyes and blind him, he falls on the ground, and, what will astonish you, the roc comes and seizes them both in his claws, and flies away with them to feed its young.

I will pass over several other peculiarities of this island, lest I should tire you. I exchanged some of my diamonds for valuable merchandise: from thence we went to other islands, and at last, after having touched at several ports, we reached Balsora, from which place I returned to Bagdad. The first thing I did was to distribute a great deal of money amongst the poor, and I enjoyed with

credit and honour the rest of my immense riches, which I had acquired with so much labour and fatigue.

Here Sindbad completed the relation of his second voyage. He again ordered a hundred sequins to be given to Hindbad, whom he invited to come on the morrow to hear the history of the third.

The guests returned home, and the following day repaired at the same hour to the house of Sindbad, where the porter, who had almost forgotten his misery, also made his appearance.—They sat down to table, and after the repast was ended, Sindbad requested the company to attend to him, and he began the detail of his third voyage.

THE THIRD VOYAGE OF SINDBAD, THE SAILOR.

THE comfortable way of life in which I had settled myself, soon obliterated the remembrance of the dangers I had experienced in my two voyages; but as I was in the prime of life, I grew tired of passing my days in a slothful repose; and banishing all thoughts of the perils I might encounter, I set off from Bagdad with some rich merchandise of the country, which I conveyed to Balsora. There I again embarked with other merchants; we made a long voyage, and touched at several ports, and by these means made a very advantageous commerce.

One day, when we were in the open sea, we were overtaken by a violent tempest, which made us lose our reckoning. It continued for several days, and drove us near an island, which the captain would gladly have been excused from touching at, but we were under the necessity of casting anchor there. When the sails were furled, the captain told us that this, as well as some of the neighbouring isles, was inhabited by hairy savages, who would come to attack us; and that although they were only dwarfs, we must not attempt to make any resistance; for as their number was inconceivable, if we should happen to kill one, they would pour upon us like locusts, and destroy us. This account put the whole crew in a terrible consternation, and we were too soon convinced that the captain had spoken the truth. We saw coming towards us an innumerable multitude of hideous savages, entirely covered with red hair, and about two feet high. They threw themselves into the sea, and swam to the ship, which they soon completely encompassed. They spoke to us as they approached, but we could not understand their language. They began to climb the sides and ropes of the vessel with so much swiftness and agility, that their feet scarcely seemed to touch them, and soon reached the deck.

You may imagine the situation we were in, not daring to defend ourselves, nor even to speak to them, to endeavour to avert the impending danger. They unfurled the sails, cut the cable from the anchor, and after dragging the ship to shore obliged us to disembark: after this they conveyed us to another island, from whence they had come. All voyagers carefully avoided this island for the dismal reason you are going to hear; but our misfortune had led us there, and we were obliged to submit.

We left the shore, and advancing farther into the island, we found some fruits and herbs, which we ate of, to prolong our lives as much as possible, for we all expected to be sacrificed. As we walked, we perceived at some distance a considerable edifice, towards which we bent our way. It was a large and high palace, with a folding door of ebony, which opened as we pushed it. We entered the court-yard, and facing us saw a vast apartment, with a vestibule, on one side of which was a large heap of human bones, and on the opposite one a number of spits for roasting. We trembled at this spectacle; and as we were

fatigued with walking, our legs failed us, and we fell on the earth, where we remained a considerable time, unable to move from fear.

The sun was setting; and while we were in the piteous state I have described, the door of the apartment suddenly opened with a loud noise, and the frightful figure of a black man, as tall as a large palm-tree, came forward. In the middle of his forehead one eye, red and fiery as a burning coal, stood alone: his front teeth were long and sharp, and projected from his mouth, which was as wide as that of a horse, with the under lip hanging on his breast: his ears resembled those of an elephant, and covered his shoulders, and his long and curved nails were like the talons of an immense bird. At the sight of this hideous giant we all fainted, and remained a long time like dead men.

At last our senses returned, and we saw him seated under the vestibule, examining us with his piercing eye. When he had viewed us well, he advanced towards us, and having approached, he extended his hand to me, and taking me up by the neck, turned me round all ways, as a butcher would handle the head of a sheep. After having well considered me, finding that I was little more than skin and bone, he released me. He took up each of the others in their turn, and examined them in the same manner, and as the captain was the fattest of the party, he held him in one hand as I should a sparrow, and with the other thrust a spit through his body; then kindling a large fire, he roasted him, and ate him for his supper in the apartment, whither he retired. Having finished his repast, he returned to the vestibule, where he lay down to sleep, and snored louder than thunder. He did not wake till the next morning, but we passed the night in the most agonizing suspense; when daylight returned, the giant awoke and went abroad, leaving us in the palace.

When we supposed him at some distance, we began to give vent to our lamentations, for the fear of disturbing the giant had kept us silent during the night. The palace resounded with groans. Although we amounted to a considerable number, and had but one common enemy, yet the idea of delivering ourselves by his death never occurred.

We deliberated on various methods, but could not determine on any; and submitting ourselves to the will of God, we passed the day in walking over the island, and eating such plants and fruit as we met with. Towards evening we sought for some shelter to pass the night, but finding none, were obliged to return to the palace.

The giant did not fail to return to sup again on one of our companions, after which he fell asleep and snored till daybreak, when he arose and went out as before. Our situation appeared to be so helpless, that some of my comrades were on the point of throwing themselves into the sea rather than be sacrificed in so dreadful a manner, and advised the rest to follow their example; but one of the company thus addressed them:—"We are forbidden," said he, "to kill ourselves; and even were that permitted, would it not be more rational to endeavour to destroy the barbarous monster who has destined us to such a cruel death?"

As I had already formed a project of that nature, I now communicated it to my fellow-sufferers, who approved of it. "My friends," said I then, "you know that there is a great deal of wood on the sea-shore; if you will take my advice, we can make some rafts, and when they are finished, we will leave them in a proper place, till we can find an opportunity to make use of them. In the mean time we can put in execution the design I proposed to you, to deliver ourselves from the giant; if it succeeds, we may wait here with patience till some vessel passes, by means of which we may quit this fatal isle; if, on the contrary, we miss our aim, we shall have recourse to our rafts, and put to sea. I own that in exposing ourselves to the fury of the waves on such fragile barks,

we run a great hazard of losing our lives; but if we are destined to perish, is it not preferable to meet with a watery grave than to be buried in the entrails of that monster, who has already devoured two of our companions?" My advice was approved by all, and we immediately built some rafts, large enough to contain three persons on each.

We returned to the palace towards evening, and the giant arrived a short time after us. Again one of our party was sacrificed to his inhuman appetite. But we were soon revenged of his cruelty: after he had finished his horrible meal, he as usual lay himself down to sleep; as soon as we heard him snore, nine of the most courageous amongst us and myself, took each a spit, and heating the points red hot, thrust them into his eye, and blinded him.

The pain which the giant suffered made him groan hideously; he suddenly raised himself, and extended his arms on all sides to seize some one, and sacrifice him to his rage; but fortunately we had time to get at some distance from him, and to throw ourselves on the ground in places where he could not set his feet on us. After having sought us in vain, he at last found the door and went out, bellowing with pain.

We quitted the place immediately after the giant, and repaired to the shore, in that part where our rafts lay. We set them afloat, and waited till daybreak to board them, in case we should see the giant approach, with some guide to lead him to us; but we hoped, that if he did not make his appearance by that time, and if his cries and groans, which resounded through the air, were discontinued, we might suppose him dead; and in that case we proposed remaining in the island till some safer conveyance should offer. But the sun had scarcely risen above the horizon, when we perceived our cruel enemy, accompanied by two giants of nearly his own size, who conducted him and a great number of others, who walked before him at a considerable rate.

At this sight we ran precipitately to our rafts, and rowed away as fast as possible. The giants seeing this, provided themselves with large stones, hastened to the shore, and even ventured to their middles into the sea, to throw them at us, which they did so adroitly, as to sink all the rafts excepting that I was upon; so that myself and two companions were the only fortunate ones, the others being all drowned. As we rowed with all our strength, we soon got out of reach of the stones.

When we were in the open sea, we became the sport of the winds and waves, and we passed that day and night in the most cruel suspense; but on the morrow we had the good fortune to be thrown on an island, where we landed with great joy. We found some excellent fruits, which served to re-establish our exhausted strength.

Towards night we went to sleep on the sea-shore, but were soon awakened by the noise which the scales of an immense serpent, long as a palm-tree, made on the ground. It was so near to us that it devoured one of my companions, notwithstanding the efforts he made to extricate himself; for the serpent shook him several times, and then crushing him on the earth, quickly swallowed him.

My other comrade and myself immediately took to flight; and although we had reached some distance, we heard a noise which made us suppose that the serpent was vomiting the bones of the unhappy man it had destroyed. On the following day we perceived our suspicions to have been well founded. "O God," I then exclaimed, "to what are we exposed? Yesterday we were rejoicing at our escape from the cruelty of a giant, and the fury of the waves, and to-day we are again terrified by a peril not less imminent."

As we walked along, we remarked a large and high tree, on which we proposed to pass the following night, to be in safety. We ate some fruits as on the preceding day, and at the approach of night we climbed the tree. We soon

heard the serpent, who came hissing to the foot of the tree ; it raised itself against the trunk, and meeting with my companion, who was lower than I was, it swallowed him and retired.

I remained on the tree till daybreak, when I descended, more dead than alive ; indeed, I could only expect to meet with the same fate. This idea chilled me with horror, and I advanced some paces to throw myself into the sea ; but as life is desirable as long as it will last, I resisted this impulse of despair, and submitted myself to the will of God, who disposes of our lives as is best for us.

I collected a great quantity of small wood and furze, and tying it in fagots, put it round the tree in a large circle, and tied some across the top to cover my head. This being done, I inclosed myself within this circle when the evening came on, having the dismal consolation that I had done all in my power to preserve my life. The serpent did not fail to return and try to devour me ; but he could not succeed, on account of the rampart I had formed. The whole night he was besieging me, as a cat would a mouse ; at last day returned, and he retired, but I did not venture out of my fortress till the sun shone.

I was so fatigued with watching, as well as with the exertion of forming my retreat, and had suffered so much from his pestilential breath, that death appearing preferable to a repetition of such horror, I again ran towards the sea, with the intention of putting an end to my existence ; but God pitied my condition, and at the moment that I was going to throw myself into the sea, I perceived a vessel at a great distance. I cried with all my strength, and unfolded the linen of my turban to attract the attention of those on board. This had the desired effect ; all the crew saw me, and the captain sent a boat for me.

As soon as I was on board, the merchants and seamen were eager to learn by what chance I had reached that desert island, and after I had related to them all that had happened, the oldest of them told me that they had often heard of the giants who lived in that island ; that they were anthropophagi, and that they devoured men raw as well as roasted. With regard to the serpents, they added, that there were many in that island, which hid themselves in the day, and appeared at night.

After they had expressed their joy at my fortunate escape from so many perils, as they supposed I must be in want of something to eat, they pressed me to partake of their best ; and the captain, observing that my dress was much torn, had the generosity to give me one of his.

We remained a considerable time at sea, and touched at several islands ; at length we landed on that of Salahat, where the sandal-wood is cultivated, which is much used in medicine. We entered the port and cast anchor, and the merchants began to unload their goods, to sell or exchange them. One day the captain called me to him and said, "Brother, I have in my possession some goods which belonged to a merchant, who was for some time on board my ship. As this merchant is dead, I am going to have them valued, that I may render some account of them to his heirs, should I ever meet with them." The bales he was speaking of were already upon deck. He showed them me, saying, "These are the goods in question ; I wish you to take the charge of them, and negotiate them, on the condition of receiving what is usually due for your trouble." I consented, and thanked him for the opportunity he afforded me of employing myself.

The writer of the ship registred all the bales with the names of the merchants to whom they belonged ; when he asked the captain by what name he should register those destined for my charge, the captain replied, "By the name of Sindbad, the Sailor." I could not hear my own name without emotion, and

looking at the captain, I recognised him to be the very same person who in my second voyage had left me on the island, where I had fallen asleep by the side of a brook, and who had put to sea without waiting for me. I did not at first recollect him, so much was he changed from the time I had seen him. As he thought me dead, it is not to be wondered that he did not recognise me. "Captain," said I to him, "was the merchant to whom these things belonged called Sindbad?" "Yes," returned he, "that was his name; he was from Bagdad, and embarked on board my vessel at Balsora. One day, when we went ashore on an island for fresh water, I know not by what mistake he was left behind; none of the crew perceived it till four hours after, when the wind blew so fresh against us, that it was impossible to return." "You believe him to be dead?" resumed I. "Most assuredly," replied the captain. "Well then," said I, "open your eyes and know that the same Sindbad whom you left in the desert island, is now before you. I fell asleep on the banks of a little stream, and when I awoke I perceived that the ship was gone."

At these words, the captain fixed his eyes on me, and after having examined me very attentively, at last recollected me. "God be praised!" cried he, embracing me, "I am delighted that fortune has given me an opportunity of repairing my fault. Here are your goods, which I have preserved with care, and always had valued at every port I stopped at. I return them to you with the profit I have made on them." I received them with the gratitude which such an action demanded.

From the island of Salabat we went to another, where I furnished myself with cloves, cinnamon, and other spices. When we had sailed some distance from it, we perceived an immense tortoise, that was twenty cubits in length and breadth. We also saw an amphibious animal, that had milk like a cow (the hippopotamus); its skin is so hard, that bucklers are frequently made of it. I saw another that was of the make and colour of a camel. At length, after a long voyage, we arrived at Balsora, from whence I came to Bagdad with so much wealth that I did not know the amount of it. I gave a great deal to the poor, and made considerable additions to my landed estates.

Sindbad thus finished the history of his third voyage, and again gave Hindbad a hundred sequins, inviting him to the usual repast on the morrow, when he should hear the account of the fourth voyage. Hindbad and the other guests retired, and the following day turned at the same hour. After the dinner was over, Sindbad continued the relation of his adventures.

THE FOURTH VOYAGE OF SINDBAD, THE SAILOR.

THE pleasures and dissipations into which I entered after my third voyage, had not charms sufficiently powerful to deter me from venturing on the sea again. I gave way to my love for traffic and novelty; and after having settled my affairs, and furnished myself with the merchandise suited to the places I intended to visit, I set out and travelled towards Persia, some of the provinces of which I traversed, and at last reached a port, where I embarked. We set sail, and touched at several ports of Terra Firma, and of some oriental islands; but one day, making a great tack, we were surprised by a sudden squall of wind, which obliged the captain to lower the sails. He gave the necessary orders for preventing the danger we were threatened with, but all our precautions were fruitless; our exertions did not succeed; the sails were torn in a thousand pieces, and the vessel, becoming ungovernable, was driven on a sand-bank, and went to pieces, by which a great number of the crew, as well as the cargo, perished.

I had the good fortune, as well as some other merchants and seamen, to get hold of a plank; we were all drawn by the strength of the current towards an island that lay before us. We found some fruits and fresh water, which re-established our strength, and we lay down to sleep in the spot where the waves had thrown us, without seeking any farther: the grief we felt at our misfortune rendered us careless of our fate. The next morning, when the sun was risen, we left the shore, and advancing in the island, perceived some habitations, towards which we bent our way. When we drew near, a great number of blacks came out to us, and surrounded us, seized our persons, of which they seemed to make a division, and then conducted us to their houses.

Five of my comrades and myself were taken into the same place. They made us sit down, and then offered us a certain herb, inviting us by signs to eat of it. My companions, without considering that they who gave it to us did not eat of it, only consulted their appetites, and devoured it with avidity. I, who had a sort of presentiment that it was for no good purpose, refused even to taste it; and it was well I did, for a short time after I perceived that my companions soon lost all recollection of their situation, and did not know what they said. They then served us with some rice dressed with the oil of the cocoa-nut, and my comrades, not being sensible of what they did, ate it ravenously. I ate some also, but very little.

The blacks had presented the herb first to affect our heads, and thus banish the sorrow which our miserable situation would create, and the rice was given to fatten us. As they were anthropophagi, they designed to feast on us when we were in good condition. My poor companions fell victims to this barbarous custom, because they had lost their senses, and could not foresee their destiny. As for me, instead of fattening as the others had done, I grew thinner every day. The fear of death, which constantly haunted me, turned the aliments I took to poison, and I fell into a state of languor, which was in the end very beneficial: for the blacks, having eaten my comrades, were contented to let me remain till I was better picking.

In the mean time I was allowed a great deal of liberty, and my actions were scarcely observed. This afforded me the opportunity one day of quitting the habitation of the blacks and escaping. An old man who saw and guessed my intention, called me to return; but I only quickened my pace, and soon got out of his sight. This old man was the only person in the place; all the other blacks had absented themselves, and were not to return till night, as was their frequent custom. Being, therefore, certain that they would be too late to come in search of me when they returned home, I continued my flight till evening, when I stopped to take a little rest and satisfy my hunger. I soon proceeded and walked without intermission for seven days, taking care to avoid those places which appeared inhabited, and living on cocoa-nuts, which furnished me with drink as well as food.

On the eighth day I came to the sea-shore; here I saw some white people like myself, employed in gathering pepper, of which there was in that place a great abundance. Such an occupation was a good omen to me, and I approached them without fear of danger. They came towards me as soon as they perceived me, and asked me in Arabic from whence I came.

Delighted to hear my native language once more, I readily complied with their request, and related to them the manner in which I had been shipwrecked, and got to that island where I had fallen into the hands of the blacks. "But these blacks," said they, "eat men; by what miracle, then, could you escape their cruelty?" I gave them the same account which you have been listening to, and they were very much surprised.

I remained with them until they had collected as much pepper as they chose,

after which they made me embark with them in the vessel which had conveyed them, and we soon reached another island, from whence they had come. They presented me to their king, who was a good prince. He had the patience to listen to the recital of my adventures, which astonished him; and he ordered me some new clothes, and desired I might be taken care of. This island was very populous, and abounded in all sorts of articles for commerce, which was carried on to a great extent in the town where the king resided. This agreeable retreat began to console me for my misfortunes, and the kindness of this generous prince made me completely happy. Indeed I appeared to be his greatest favourite; consequently all ranks of people endeavoured to please me, so that I was soon considered more as a native than a stranger.

I remarked one thing, which appeared to me very singular: every one, the king not excepted, rode on horseback without either bridle or stirrups. I one day took the liberty to ask his majesty why such things were excluded. He replied that he was entirely ignorant of what I meant.

I immediately went to a workman, and gave him a model to make the tree of a saddle from: that finished, I covered it myself with leather, richly embroidered in gold, and stuffed it with hair. I then applied to a locksmith, who made me a bit according to the pattern I gave him, and some stirrups also.

When these things were completed, I presented them to the king, and tried them on one of his horses: the prince then mounted it, and was so pleased with the invention, that he testified his approbation by making me considerable presents. I was then obliged to make several saddles for his ministers and the principal officers of his household, who all rewarded me with very rich and handsome presents. I also made some for the most respectable inhabitants of the town, by which I gained great reputation and credit.

As I constantly attended at court, the king said to me one day, "Sindbad, I love you, and I know that all my subjects who have any knowledge of you, follow my example, and entertain a high regard for you. I have one request to make, which you must not deny me." "Sire," replied I, "there is nothing your majesty can command, which I will not undertake, to prove my obedience to your orders. Your power over me is absolute." "I wish you to marry," resumed the prince, "that you may have a more tender tie to attach you to my dominions, and prevent your returning to your native country." As I did not dare to refuse the king's offer, he married me to a lady of his court, who was noble, beautiful, rich, and accomplished. After the ceremony of the nuptials, I took up my abode in the house of my wife, and lived with her for some time in perfect harmony. Nevertheless, I was discontented with my situation, and designed to make my escape the first convenient opportunity, and return to Bagdad, which the splendid establishment I was then in possession of could not obliterate from my mind.

These were my sentiments, when the wife of one of my neighbours, with whom I was very intimate, fell sick and died. I went to console him, and finding him in the deepest affliction, "May God preserve you," said I to him, "and grant you a long life." "Alas," replied he, "how can I obtain what you wish me? I have only one hour to live." "Oh," resumed I, "do not suffer such dismal ideas to take possession of your mind; I hope that will not be the case, and that I shall enjoy your friendship for many years." "I wish with all my heart," said he, "that your life may be of long duration; as for me, the die is cast, and this day I shall be buried with my wife. Such is the custom which our ancestors have established in this island, and which is still inviolably observed; the husband is interred alive with his deceased wife, the wife with the husband, in the same way: nothing can save me, and every one submits to this law."

Whilst he was relating to me this singular species of barbarity, which filled me with terror, his relations, friends, and neighbours arrived to be present at the funeral. They dressed the corpse of the woman in the richest attire, as on the day of her nuptials, and decorated her with all her jewels. They then placed her uncovered on a bier, and the procession set out. The husband, dressed in mourning, went immediately after the body of his wife, and the rest followed. They bent their course towards a high mountain, and when they were arrived, a large stone, which covered a deep pit, was raised, and the body let down into it, without taking off any of the ornaments. After that, the husband took his leave of his relations and friends, and without making any resistance, suffered himself to be placed on a bier, with a jug of water and seven small loaves by his side; he was then let down, as his wife had been. This mountain extended a great way, and served as a boundary to the ocean, and the pit was very deep. When the ceremony was completed, the stone was replaced, and the company retired. I need scarcely add, gentlemen, that I was particularly affected with this ceremony. All the others who were present did not appear to feel it, from their being habituated to see the same kind of scene so frequently. I could not avoid telling the king my sentiments on this subject. "Sire," said I, "I cannot express my astonishment at the strange custom which subsists in your dominions of interring the living with the dead; I have visited many nations, but in the whole course of my travels I never heard of so cruel a law." "What can I do, Sindbad?" replied the king; "it is a law common to all ranks, and even I submit to its decree; I shall be interred alive with the queen, my consort, if she happens to die first." "Sire," resumed I, "will your majesty allow me to ask if foreigners are obliged to observe this custom?" "Certainly," said the king, smiling at the motive of my question, "they are not exempted when they marry in the island."

I returned home thoughtful and sad at this reply. The fear that my wife might die first, and that I must be interred with her, was a reflection of the most distressing nature. Yet, how could I remedy this evil? I must have patience, and submit to the will of God. Nevertheless, I trembled at the slightest indisposition of my wife; and, alas! I soon had good reason to fear; she was taken dangerously ill, and died in a few days. Judge of my horror. To be interred alive did not appear to me a more desirable end than that of being devoured by the anthropophagi; yet I was obliged to comply. The king, accompanied by his whole court, would honour the procession with his presence, and the principal inhabitants of the city also, out of respect to me, were present at my interment.

When all was in readiness for the ceremony, the corpse of my wife, decorated with her jewels and most magnificent clothes, was placed on the bier, and the procession set out. Being the second personage in this woful tragedy, I followed the body of my wife, my eyes bathed in tears, and deploring my miserable destiny. Before we arrived at the mountain, I wished to make trial of the compassion of the spectators. I first addressed myself to the king, then to those who were near me, and bowing to the ground to kiss the hem of their garment, I entreated them to have pity on me. "Consider," said I, "that I am a stranger, who ought not to be subject to so rigorous a law, and that I have another wife and children in my own country." I pronounced these words in an affecting tone, but no one seemed moved; on the contrary, they hastened to put the corpse in the pit, and soon after I was let down also, on another bier, with a jug of water and seven loaves. At last, this fatal ceremony being completed, they replaced the stone over the mouth of the pit, notwithstanding the excess of my grief and my piteous lamentation.

As I approached the bottom, I discovered, by the little light that shone from

above, the shape of this subterranean abode. It was a vast cavern, which might be about fifty cubits deep. I soon smelt an insupportable stench, which arose from the carcasses that were spread around. I even fancied I heard the last sighs of some who had lately fallen victims to this inhuman law. I had no sooner reached the bottom than I left the bier, and stopping my nostrils, went to a distance from the dead bodies. I threw myself on the ground, where I remained a long time, bathed in tears; then reflecting on my cruel fate, "It is true," said I, "that God disposes of us as seems best to his all-seeing Providence; but, unhappy Sindbad, is it not your own fault that you are now brought to this singular death? Would to Heaven I had perished in some of the dreadful wrecks from which I have been saved; I should not now have had to languish in this miserable abode of lingering death. But have I not brought it on myself by my accursed avarice? Ah, wretch! I ought to have remained with my family, and enjoyed peaceably the fruits of my former labours."

Such were the useless expressions of rage and despair with which I made the cavern re-echo. I beat my head and breast, and gave way to the most violent grief. Nevertheless, shall I confess to you, that instead of calling on death to release me from this habitation of despair, the love of life still glowed within me, and induced me to prolong my days. I felt my way to the bier on which I had been placed. Notwithstanding the intense obscurity which prevailed, I found my bread and water, and ate of it. The cave now appeared more spacious, and to contain more bodies than I had at first supposed. I subsisted for some days on my provisions; but as soon as they were exhausted I prepared to die. I was resigned to my fate, when I heard the stone above raised. A corpse and living person were let down. The deceased was a man. It is natural to have recourse to violent methods when reduced to the last extremity. While the woman was descending, I approached the spot where her bier was to be placed, and when I perceived the aperture above to be closed, I gave the unhappy female two or three great blows on the head with a large bone. She was stunned, or more properly speaking, I killed her; and as I had only committed this inhuman action to obtain the bread and water which had been allowed her, I had now provisions for some days. At the end of that time a dead woman and her living husband were let down. I killed the man in the same manner; and as at that time there happened, fortunately for me, to be a mortality in the city, I was not in want of food, employing always the same means to obtain it.

One day, when I had just put an end to an unfortunate woman, I heard a sound like breathing and a footstep. I advanced to the part from whence the sound proceeded; I heard a louder breathing at my approach, and I fancied I saw something fleeing from me. I followed this species of shadow, which occasionally stopped, and then again retreated, panting as I drew near. I pursued it so long, and went so far, that at last I perceived a small speck of light, resembling a star. I continued to walk towards this light, sometimes losing it, according to the obstacles which arose, but always recovering it again, till I arrived at an opening in the rock large enough to allow me to pass.

At this discovery I stopped for some time to recover from the violent emotion occasioned by my walking quick; then passing through the crevice, I found myself on the sea-shore. You may imagine the excess of my joy; it was so great that I could scarcely be satisfied that my imagination did not deceive me. When I became convinced that it was a reality, and that my senses were still sound, I perceived that the thing which I had heard pant, and which I had followed, was an animal that lived in the sea, and was in the habit of going into that cave to devour the dead bodies.

I examined the mountain, and observed that it was situated between the city and the sea, without any communication between them, for it was so steep that

it was not practicable. I prostrated myself on the shore, to thank God for the mercy he had shown me. I then returned to the cave to get some bread, which I brought out and ate with much better appetite than I had enjoyed since my interment in that gloomy mansion.

I returned again, to collect as well as I could, by feeling on the different biers, all the diamonds, rubies, pearls, golden bracelets, in short, everything of value that I could find, and brought it all to the shore. I tied them up in several packets with the cords which had served to let down the biers, of which there was a great quantity. I left them in a convenient place till a proper opportunity should offer, without fear of their being spoiled by the rain, for it was not the season for wet weather.

At the end of two or three days I perceived a vessel just sailing out of the harbour, and passing by the spot where I was, I made signs with the linen of my turban, and cried aloud with all my strength. They heard me on board, and despatched a boat to fetch me. When the sailors inquired by what misfortune I had got in that place, I replied that I had been wrecked two days since on that shore, with all my merchandise. Fortunately for me, these people did not consider whether my story was probable, but, satisfied with my answer, they took me on board with my bales.

When we had reached the vessel, the captain, happy in being instrumental to my safety, and occupied with the management of the ship, believed without any difficulty the tale of the wreck, to convince him of which I offered him some precious stones, but he refused them.

We passed several islands, amongst others the island of Bells, distant about ten days' sail from that of Serendib (Ceylon), sailing with a fair wind, and six days' from the isle of Kela (Calabar), where we landed. Here there were some lead-mines, some Indian canes, and excellent camphor.

The king of the isle of Kela is very rich and powerful. His authority extends over the island of Bells, which is two days' journey in extent. The inhabitants are still so uncivilized as to eat human flesh. After we had made an advantageous traffic in this island, we again set sail, and touched at several ports. At length I arrived happily at Bagdad with immense riches, of which it is needless to give you a detail. To show my gratitude to Heaven for the mercies shown me, I spent a great deal in charity, some for the support of mosques, and some for the subsistence of the poor. I then entirely gave myself up to the society of my relations and friends, and passed my time in feasting and entertainments.

Sindbad here concluded the relation of his fourth voyage, which occasioned still more surprise in his audience than the three preceding ones had done. He repeated his present of a hundred sequins to Hindbad, whom he requested, with the rest of the company, to return the following day to dine, and hear the detail of his fifth voyage. Hindbad and the others took their leave and retired. The next day, when all were assembled, they sat down to table, and when the repast was over, Sindbad began the account of his fifth voyage as follows.

THE FIFTH VOYAGE OF SINDBAD, THE SAILOR.

THE pleasures I enjoyed soon made me forget the pains I had undergone; yet they were not sufficiently attractive to prevent my forming the resolution of venturing a fifth time on the sea. I again provided myself with merchandise, packed it, and sent it by land-carriage to the nearest seaport; where, unwilling to trust any more to a captain, and wishing to have a vessel of my own, I built and equipped one at my own expense. As soon as it was finished, I loaded it

and embarked; and as I had not sufficient cargo to fill it myself, I received several merchants of different nations with their goods.

We hoisted our sails the first fair wind and put to sea. After sailing a considerable time, the first place we stopped at was a desert island, where we found the egg of a roc, as large as that I spoke of on a former occasion; it contained a small roc, which was just ready to hatch, its beak having begun to make its appearance. The merchants who were with me broke the egg with hatchets, and cut out the young roc piece by piece, and roasted it. I had seriously advised them not to touch the egg, but they would not attend to me.

They had scarcely finished their meal, when two immense clouds appeared in the air at a considerable distance from us. The captain, whom I had hired to have the care of the vessel, knowing, by experience, what it was, cried out that it was the father and mother of the young roc, and warned us to re-embark as quickly as possible, to avoid the danger which threatened us. We took his advice, and set sail immediately.

The two rocs approached, uttering the most frightful screams, which they redoubled on finding the state of their egg, and that the young one was no more. Determining to revenge themselves, they flew away towards the part from whence they came, and disappeared for some time, during which we used all diligence to sail away, and prevent what nevertheless befell us.

They returned, and we perceived that they each had an enormous piece of rock in their claws. When they were exactly over our ship, they stopped, and suspending themselves in the air, one of them let fall the piece of rock he held. By the address of the pilot, who suddenly turned the vessel, it did not tumble on us, but fell close to us into the sea, in which it made such a chasm that we could almost see the bottom. The other bird, unfortunately for us, let his piece of rock fall so immediately on the ship, that it broke and split it into a thousand pieces. The sailors and passengers were all either crushed to death, or drowned. I was myself under water for some time, but rising again to the surface, I had the good fortune to seize a piece of the wreck. Thus, swimming sometimes with one hand and sometimes with the other, still holding what I had fixed myself to, and having the wind and current both in my favour, I at length reached an island, where the shore was very steep; I nevertheless overcame this difficulty, and got on land.

I seated myself on the grass to rest from my fatigue, after which I arose and advanced into the island, to reconnoitre the ground. It seemed to be in a delicious garden; wherever I turned my eyes I saw beautiful trees, some loaded with green, others with ripe fruits, and transparent streams meandering between them. I ate of the fruits, which I found to be excellent, and quenched my thirst at the inviting brooks.

Night being arrived, I lay down on the grass in a convenient spot; but I did not sleep an hour at a time; my sleep was continually interrupted by the fear of being alone in such a desert place, so that I employed the greatest part of the night in lamenting and reproaching myself for the imprudence of venturing from home, when I had everything to make me comfortable there. These reflections led me so far, that I even began to form a project against my life; but day returning with its cheerful light, dissipated this gloomy idea. I arose and walked amongst the trees, though not without some degree of apprehension.

When I had advanced a little way in the island, I perceived an old man, who appeared much broken down. He was seated on the bank of a little rivulet: at first I supposed he might be like myself, shipwrecked. I approached and saluted him, to which he made no other return, than a slight inclination of the head. I asked him what he was doing, but instead of

replying, he made signs to me to take him on my shoulders and cross the brook, making me understand that he wanted to gather some fruit.

I supposed he wished me to render him this piece of service; so taking him on my back, I stemmed the stream; when I had reached the other side, I stooped, and desired him to alight; instead of which (I cannot help laughing whenever I think of it), this old man, who appeared to me so decrepit, nimbly threw his legs, which I now saw were covered with a skin like a cow's, over my neck, and seated himself fast on my shoulders, at the same time squeezing my throat so violently, that I expected to be strangled; this alarmed me so much, that I fainted away.

Notwithstanding my situation, the old man kept his place on my neck; he only loosed his hold sufficiently to allow me to breathe. When I was a little recovered, he pushed one of his feet against my stomach, and kicking my side with the other, obliged me to get up. He then made me walk under some trees, and forced me to gather and eat the fruit we met with. He never quitted his hold during the day, and when I wished to rest at night, he laid himself on the ground with me, always fixed to my neck. He never failed to awaken me in the morning, which he effected by pushing me, and then he made me get up and walk, kicking me all the time. Conceive, gentlemen, the plague of bearing this burden, without the possibility of getting rid of it.

One day, having found on the ground several dried gourds, which had fallen from the tree that bore them, I took a pretty large one, and after having cleared it well, I squeezed into it the juice of several bunches of grapes, which the island produced in great abundance. When I had filled the gourd, I placed in a particular spot, and some days after returned with the old man, when tasting the contents, I found it to be converted into excellent wine, which for a little time made me forget the ills that oppressed me. It gave me new vigour, and raised my spirits so high, that I began to sing and dance as I went along.

The old man perceiving the effect this draught had taken on my spirits, made signs to me to let him taste it; I gave him the gourd, and the liquor pleased his palate so well, that he drank it to the last drop, there was enough to inebriate him, and the fumes of the wine very soon rose into his head; he then began to sing after his own manner, and to stagger on my shoulders. The blows he gave himself made him return what he had on his stomach, and his legs loosened by degrees; so that finding he no longer held me tight, I threw him on the ground, where he remained motionless; I then took a large stone and crushed him to death.

I was much rejoiced at having so effectually got rid of this old man, and I walked towards the sea-shore, where I met some people who belonged to a vessel, which had anchored there to get fresh water. They were very much astonished at seeing me, and hearing the account of my adventure. "You had fallen," said they, "into the hands of the Old Man of the Sea, and you are the first whom he has not strangled; he never left those whom he had once mastered, till he had put an end to their existence; and this island is notorious for the number of persons he has killed. The sailors and merchants who land here never dare approach, excepting they are in a strong body."

Having informed me of this, they took me to their ship; where the captain received me with the greatest politeness, when he heard what had befallen me. He set sail and in a few days we landed at the port of a large city, where the houses were built of stone.

One of the merchants of the ship having contracted a friendship for me, entreated me to accompany him, and conducted me to the lodging destined for foreign merchants. He gave me a large sack, and then introduced me



SINDBAD AND THE OLD MAN OF THE SEA.

to some people belonging to the city who were also furnished with sacks; then having desired them to take me with them to gather cocoa, "Go," said he, "follow them, and do as they do; and do not stray from them, for your life will be in danger if you leave them." He gave me provisions for the day, and I set off with them.

We arrived at a large forest of tall straight trees, the trunks of which were so smooth, that it was impossible to climb up to the branches where the fruit grew. They were all cocoa-trees, and we wanted to knock down the fruit and fill our sacks. On entering the forest, we saw an amazing number of monkeys, of all sizes, which fled at our approach, and ran up the trees with surprising agility. The merchants I was with collected some stones, and threw them with great force at the monkeys, who had reached some of the highest branches. I did the same, and soon perceived that these animals were aware of our design; they gathered the cocoa-nuts and threw them down at us, with gestures which plainly showed their anger and animosity. We picked up the cocoa-nuts, and at intervals threw up stones to irritate the monkeys. By this contrivance we filled our sacks with the fruit: a thing utterly impracticable by any other method.

When we had got a sufficient quantity, we returned to the city, where the merchant who had sent me to the forest gave me the value of the cocoa-nuts I had collected. "Continue to do the same every day," said he, "till you have amassed sufficient money to convey you to your own country." I thanked him for the good advice he gave me, and by degrees I acquired such a quantity of cocoa-nuts, that I sold them for a considerable sum.

The vessel in which I came had sailed with the merchants who had loaded it with the cocoa-nuts they had purchased. I waited for the arrival of another, which shortly after came into harbour for a lading of the same materials. I sent on board all the cocoa-nuts which belonged to me, and when it was ready to sail, I took leave of the merchant to whom I was under so many obligations. As he had not yet settled his affairs, he could not embark with me.

We set sail, and steered towards the island where pepper grows in such abundance. From thence we made the island of Comari, where the best species of the aloe grows, and whose inhabitants submit themselves to a law, not to drink wine, or suffer any kind of debauchery. In these two islands I exchanged all my cocoa-nuts for pepper and aloe-wood; and I then engaged myself, with the other merchants, in a pearl-fishery, in which I employed many divers on my own account. I collected by these means a great number of very large and perfect ones, with which I joyfully put to sea, and arrived safely at Balsora, from whence I returned to Bagdad, where I sold the pepper, aloes, and pearls which I had brought with me, for a large sum. I bestowed a tenth part of my profit in charity, as I had done on my return from every former voyage, and endeavoured to recover from my fatigues by every kind of diversion.

Having concluded this narrative, Sindbad gave a hundred sequins to Hindbad, who retired with all the other guests. The same party returned to the rich Sindbad the next day; and after having regaled them as usual, he requested silence, and began the account of his sixth voyage in the following way.

THE SIXTH VOYAGE OF SINDBAD, THE SAILOR.

You are no doubt, gentlemen, surprised how I could be tempted again to expose myself to the caprice of fortune, after having undergone so many perils in my other voyages. I am astonished myself when I think of it. It was fate

alone that dragged me, at the expiration of a year, to venture myself a sixth time on the unstable sea, notwithstanding the tears and entreaties of my relations and friends, who did all in their power to persuade me to stay.

Instead of taking the route of the Persian Gulf, I passed again through some of the provinces of Persia and the Indies, and arrived at a seaport, where I embarked in a good ship, with a captain who was determined on making a long voyage. Long indeed it proved, but at the same time so unfortunate, that the captain and the pilot lost their way, and did not know how to steer. They at length got right again, but we had no reason to rejoice on the occasion, for the captain astonished us all by suddenly quitting his post, and uttering the most lamentable cries. He threw his turban on the floor, tore his beard, and beat his head, as if his senses were distracted. We asked what had occasioned these signs of affliction. "I am obliged to announce to you," said he, "that we are in the greatest peril. A rapid current carries the ship, and we shall all perish in less than a quarter of an hour. Pray God to deliver us from this imminent danger, for nothing can save us, unless he takes pity on us." He then gave orders for setting the sails, but the ropes broke in the attempt, and the ship, without a possibility of managing it, was dashed by the current against the foot of a rock, where it split and went to pieces: we had, however, time to take precautions for our safety, and to disembark our provisions, as well the most valuable part of the lading.

This being effected, the captain said, "God's will be done. Here we may dig our graves, and bid each other an eternal farewell; for we are in so desolate a place, that no one who ever was cast on this shore returned to his own home." This speech increased our affliction, and we embraced each other with tears in our eyes, deploring our wretched fate.

The mountain, at the foot of which we were, formed one side of a large and long island. This coast was covered with the remains of vessels which had been wrecked on it; and by the infinity of bones which everywhere met the eye, we were convinced of the dreadful certainty that many lives had been lost in this spot. It is almost incredible what quantities of merchandise of every sort were strewn upon the shore. All these objects only served to increase our despair.

In every other part it is common for a number of small rivers to discharge themselves into the sea, instead of which, here a large river of fresh water takes its course from the sea, and runs along the coast through a dark cave, the opening of which is extremely high and wide. What is most remarkable in this place is, that the mountain is composed of rubies, crystals, and other precious stones. Here, too, a kind of pitch, or bitumen, distils from the rock into the sea, and the fishes eating it, return it again in the form of ambergris, which the waves leave on the shore. The greatest part of the trees are aloes, which are equal in beauty to those of Comari.

To complete the description of this place, which may be termed a whirlpool, as nothing ever returns from thence; it is impossible that a ship can avoid being dragged thither, if it comes within a certain distance. If a sea-breeze blows, that assists the current, there is no remedy; and if the wind comes from land, the high mountain impedes its effect, and causes a calm, which allows the current full force, and then it whirls the ship against the coast, and dashes it to pieces as ours was. In addition to this, the mountain is so steep, that it is impossible to reach the summit, or, in fact, to escape by any means.

We remained on the shore, quite distracted, expecting to die. We had divided our provisions equally, so that each individual lived more or less time according to the consumption he made of his portion.

They who died first were interred by the others. I had the office of burying

my last companion; for besides managing what provisions were allowed me with more care than the rest, I had also a store, which I kept concealed from my comrades. Nevertheless, when I buried the last, I had so little left, that I imagined I must soon follow him, so that I dug a grave and resolved to throw myself into it, since no one remained to perform this last duty. I must confess that whilst I was thus employed, I could not avoid reproaching myself as the sole cause of my misfortune, and most heartily repented of this last voyage. Nor was I satisfied with reproaches only, but I bit my hands with despair, and had nearly put an end to my existence.

But God still had pity on me, and inspired me with the thought of going to the river, which lost itself in the hollow of the cave. I examined it with great attention, and it occurred to me that, as the river ran under ground, it must in its course come out to daylight again; if I construct a raft, thought I, and place myself on it, the current of the water may perhaps bring me to some inhabited country; if I perish, it is but changing the manner of my death; but if, on the contrary, I get safely out of this fatal place, I shall not only avoid the cruel death by which my companions perished, but may also meet with some fresh opportunity of enriching myself. Who knows that fortune does not await me on my arrival out of this frightful cavern, to recompense me for all the losses I have sustained.

I worked at my raft with fresh vigour after these reflections; I made it of thick pieces of wood and great cables, of which there was an abundance: I tied them closely together, and formed a strong vessel. When it was completed, I placed on it a cargo of rubies, emeralds, ambergris, crystal, and also some gold and silver stuffs. Having placed all these things in a proper equilibrium, and fastened them to the planks, I embarked on my raft with two little oars, which I provided myself with, and trusting to the current, I resigned myself to the will of God.

As soon as I was under the vault of the cavern, I lost the light of day; and the current carried me on without my being able to discern its course. I rowed for some days in this obscurity without ever perceiving the least ray of light. At one time the vault of the cavern was so low, that it almost knocked my head, which rendered me very attentive to avoid the danger again. During this time I consumed no more of my provisions than was absolutely necessary to sustain nature; but however frugal I might be, I consumed them all. I then fell into a sweet sleep. I cannot tell whether I slept long, but when I awoke I was surprised to find myself in an open country, near a bank of the river, to which my raft was fastened, and in the midst of a large concourse of blacks. I rose as soon as I perceived them, and saluted them; they spoke to me, but I could not understand their language.

At this moment I felt so transported with joy, that I could scarcely believe myself awake. Being at length convinced that it was not a dream, I exclaimed in these Arabic words, "Invoke the Almighty, and he will come to thy assistance; thou needest not care for aught besides. Close thine eyes, and while thou sleepest, God will change thy fortune from bad to good."

One of the blacks, who understood Arabic, having heard me pronounce these words, advanced towards me, and spoke as follows:—"Brother," said he, "be not surprised at seeing us; we live in this country, and we came hither to-day to water our fields from this river, which flows from the neighbouring mountain, by cutting canals to admit a passage for the water.

"We observed that the current bore something along, and we immediately ran to the bank to see what it was, and perceived this raft; one of us instantly swam to it, and conducted it to shore. We fastened it as you see, and were waiting for you to wake. We entreat you to relate to us your history, which must be very extraordinary; tell us how you could venture on this river, and

from whence you come." I first requested him to give me some food, after which I promised to satisfy their curiosity.

They produced several kinds of meat, and when I had satisfied my hunger, I related to them all that had happened to me, which they appeared to listen to with great admiration. As soon as I had finished my history, their interpreter told me that I had astonished them with my relation, and I must go myself to the king to recount my adventures; for they were of too extraordinary a nature to be repeated by any one but by him to whom they had happened. I replied, that I was ready to do anything they wished. The blacks then sent for a horse, which arrived shortly after; they placed me on it, and whilst some walked by my side to show me the way, others of a more robust make hauled the raft out of the water, and carried it on their shoulders, with the bales of rubies, and followed me.

We went together to the city of Serendib, for this was the name of the island, and the blacks presented me to their king. I approached his throne, where he was seated, and saluted him, as it is usual to accost the kings of India; that is to say, I prostrated myself at his feet, and kissed the earth. The prince made me rise, and receiving me with an affable air, he placed me by his side. He first asked me my name; I replied that I was called Sindbad, and surnamed the sailor, from having made several voyages; and added, that I was a citizen of Bagdad. "But," replied he, "how then came you into my dominions; from whence are you arrived?"

I concealed nothing from the king, and related to him what you have just heard; he was so pleased with it, that he ordered the history of my adventures to be written in letters of gold, that it might be preserved amongst the archives of his kingdom. The raft was then produced, and the bales were opened in his presence. He admired the aloe-wood and ambergris, but above all, the rubies and emeralds, as he had none in his treasury equal to them in value.

Perceiving that he examined my precious stones with pleasure, and that he looked repeatedly at the rarest of them, I prostrated myself before him, and took the liberty of saying, "Sire, not only my person is at your commands, but the cargo of my raft also, if your majesty will do me the honour of accepting it, and disposing of it as you think fit." He smiled, and replied, that he did not desire anything which belonged to me; for as God had given it me, I ought not to be deprived of it: that instead of diminishing my riches, he should add to them; and that when I left his dominions I should carry with me proofs of his liberality. I could only reply to this by praying for his prosperity, and by praising his generosity.

He ordered one of his officers to attend me, and gave me servants to wait upon me at his own expense. The officers faithfully fulfilled the charge they were intrusted with, and conveyed all the bales to the place destined for my lodging.

I went every day at certain hours to pay my court to the king, and employed the rest of the time in seeing the city, and whatever was most worthy of my attention.

The island of Serendib is situated exactly under the equinoctial line, so that the days and nights are of equal length. It is eighty parasangs (470 miles) long, and as many in breadth. The principal town is situated at the extremity of a beautiful valley, formed by a mountain, which is in the middle of the island, and which is by far the highest in the world; it is discernible at sea within three days' navigation of it. Rubies and many sorts of minerals are found in it, and most of the rocks are formed of emery, which is a sort of metallic stone used for cutting precious stones.

All kinds of rare and curious plants and trees, particularly the cedar and cocoa-tree, grow here in great abundance, and there are pearl-fisheries on the coast, at the mouth of the rivers : some of its valleys also produce diamonds. I made a devotional journey up the mountain, to the spot where Adam was placed on his banishment from Paradise ; and I had the curiosity to ascend to the summit.

When I came back to the city, I entreated the king to grant me permission to return to my native country, which he did in the most obliging and honourable manner. He compelled me to receive a rich present, which was taken from his treasury, and when I went to take my leave, he deposited in my care another still more considerable than the first, and at the same time gave me a letter for the Commander of the Believers, our sovereign lord, saying, " I beg you to present from me this letter and this present to the Caliph Haroun Alraschid, and to assure him of my friendship." I took the present and the letter, with the greatest respect, and promised his majesty to execute the orders with which he was pleased to honour me, with the greatest punctuality. Before I embarked, the king sent for the captain and the merchants with whom I was to sail, and charged them to pay me all possible attention.

The letter of the king of Serendib was written on the skin of a certain animal, highly prized in that country on account of its rareness. The colour of it approaches to yellow. The letter itself was in characters of pure, and it contained the following words in the Indian language :—

" The King of the Indies, who is preceded by a thousand elephants, who lives in a palace, the roof of which glitters with the lustre of a hundred thousand rubies, and who possesses in his treasury twenty thousand crowns, enriched with diamonds, to the Caliph Haroun Alraschid.

" Although the present that we send you be inconsiderable, yet receive it as a brother and a friend, in consideration of the friendship we bear you in our heart ; and which we feel happy in having an opportunity of testifying to you. We ask the same share in your affections, as we hope we deserve it, being of a rank equal to that which you hold. We salute you as a brother. Farewell."

The present consisted, first, of a vase made of one single ruby, pierced and worked into a cup of half a foot in height, and an inch thick, filled with fine round pearls, all weighing half a drachm each ; secondly, the skin of a serpent, which had scales as large as a common piece of money, the peculiar property of which was to preserve those who lay on it from all disease ; thirdly, fifty thousand drachms of the most exquisite aloë-wood, together with thirty grains of camphor as large as a pistachio-nut ; and lastly, all this was accompanied by a female slave of the most enchanting beauty, whose clothes were covered with jewels.

The ship set sail, and after a long though fortunate voyage, we landed at Balsora, from whence I returned to Bagdad. The first thing I did after my arrival, was to execute the commission I had been intrusted with. I took the letter of the king of Serendib, and presented myself at the gate of the Commander of the Faithful, followed by the beautiful slave, and some of my family, who carried the presents which had been committed to my care. I mentioned the reason of my appearance there, and was immediately conducted before the throne of the caliph. I prostrated myself at his feet, and having made a short speech, gave him the letter and the present. When he had read the contents, he inquired of me, whether it was true that the king of Serendib was as rich and powerful as he reported himself to be in his letter. I prostrated myself a second time, and when I arose, " Commander of the Faithful," said

I, "I can assure your majesty, that he does not exaggerate his riches and grandeur; I have been witness to it. Nothing can excite greater admiration than the magnificence of his palace. When this prince wishes to appear in public, a throne is prepared for him on the back of an elephant; on this he sits and proceeds between two files, composed of his ministers, favourites, and others belonging to the court. Before him, on the same elephant, sits an officer with a golden lance in his hand, and behind the throne another stands with a pillar of gold, on the top of which is placed an emerald about half a foot long and an inch thick. He is preceded by a guard of a thousand men habited in silk and gold stuffs, and mounted on elephants richly caparisoned.

"While the king is on his march, the officer, who sits before him on the elephant, from time to time cries with a loud voice, 'This is the great monarch, the powerful and tremendous sultan of the Indies, whose palace is covered with a hundred thousand rubies, and who possesses twenty thousand diamond crowns. This is the crowned monarch, greater than ever was Solima, or the great Mihragè.'

"After he has pronounced these words, the officer, who is behind the throne, cries in his turn, 'This monarch, who is so great and powerful, must die, must die, must die.' The first officer then replies, 'Hail to him who lives and dies not.'

"The king of Serendib is so just, that there are no judges in his capital, nor in any other part of his dominions; his people do not want any. They know and observe with exactness the true principles of justice, and never deviate from their duty; therefore, tribunals and magistrates would be useless amongst them." The caliph was satisfied with my discourse, and said, "The wisdom of this king appears in his letter; and after what you have told me I must confess that such wisdom is worthy of such subjects, and such subjects worthy of it." At these words he dismissed me with with a rich present.

Sindbad here finished his discourse, and his visitors retired; but Hindbad, as usual, received his hundred sequins. They returned the following day, and Sindbad began the relation of his seventh and last voyage in these terms:—

THE SEVENTH AND LAST VOYAGE OF SINDBAD, THE SAILOR.

ON my return from my sixth voyage I absolutely relinquished all thoughts of ever venturing again on the seas. I was now arrived at an age which required rest; and besides this, I had sworn never more to expose myself to the perils I had so often experienced: I prepared therefore to enjoy my life in quiet and repose.

One day, when I was regaling a number of friends, one of my servants came to tell me that an officer of the caliph wanted to speak to me. I got up from table and went to him. "The caliph," said he, "has ordered me to acquaint you that he wishes to see you." I followed the officer to the palace, and he presented me to the prince, whom I saluted by prostrating myself at his feet. "Sindbad," said he, "I am in want of you; you must do me a service, and go once more to the king of Serendib with my answer and presents; it is but right that I should make him a proper return for the civility he has shown me."

This order of the caliph was a thunderbolt to me. "Commander of the Faithful," replied I, "I am ready to execute anything that your majesty may desire; but I humbly entreat you to consider that I am worn down with the unspeakable fatigues I have undergone—I have even made a vow never to leave Bagdad." I then took occasion to recount the long detail of my adventures,

which he had the patience to listen to attentively. When I had done speaking, "I confess," said he, "that these are extraordinary adventures: nevertheless, they must not prevent your making the voyage I propose, for my sake; it is only to the island of Serendib; execute the commission I intrust you with, and then you will be at liberty to return. But you must go, for you must be sensible that it would be highly indecorous, as well as derogatory to my dignity, to be under obligations to the king of that island."

As I plainly saw that the caliph had resolved on my going, I signified to him that I was ready to obey his commands. He seemed much pleased, and ordered me a thousand sequins to pay the expenses of the voyage.

In a few days I was prepared for my departure; and as soon as I had received the presents of the caliph, together with a letter, written with his own hand, I set off and took the route of Balsora, from whence I embarked. After a pleasant voyage, I arrived at the island of Serendib. I immediately acquainted the ministers with the commission I was come upon, and begged them to procure me an audience as soon as possible. They did not fail to attend to my wishes, and conducted me to the palace. I saluted the king by prostrating myself according to the usual custom.

This prince immediately recollected me, and evinced great joy at my return. "Welcome, Sindbad," said he; "I assure you I have often thought of you since your departure. Blessed be this day, in which I see you again." I returned the compliment, and after thanking him for his kindness, I delivered the letter and present of the caliph, which he received with every mark of satisfaction and pleasure.

The caliph sent him a complete bed of gold tissue, estimated at a thousand sequins, fifty robes of a very rich stuff, a hundred more of white linen, the finest that could be procured from Cairo, Suez, Cufa, and Alexandria; another bed of crimson, also another of a different make: a vase of agate, greater in width than in depth, of the thickness of a finger; on the sides there was sculptured in bas-relief a man kneeling on the ground, and in his hand a bow and arrow, with which he was going to let fly at a lion. Besides these, he sent him a richly-ornamented table, which was supposed from tradition to have belonged to the great Solomon. The letter of the caliph was written in these terms:—

"Greeting in the name of the sovereign guide of the right road, to the powerful and happy sultan, from Abdalla Haroun Alraschid, whom God hath set in the place of honour, after his ancestors of happy memory."

"We have received your letter with joy, and we send you this reply, dictated by the council of our porte, the garden of superior wits. We hope that when you look upon it you will perceive our good intention, and think it agreeable. Adieu."

The king of Serendib was rejoiced to find that the caliph returned a testimony of his friendship. Soon after this audience I requested another to take my leave, which I had some difficulty to obtain. At length I succeeded, and the king, at my departure, ordered me a very handsome present. I re-embarked immediately, intending to return to Bagdad, but had not the good fortune to arrive so soon as I expected, for God had disposed it otherwise.

Three or four days after we had set sail, we were attacked by corsairs, who easily made themselves masters of our vessel, as we were not in a state for defence. Some persons in the ship attempted to make resistance, but it cost them their lives. I, and all those who had the prudence not to oppose the intention of the corsairs were made slaves. After they had stripped us, and

substituted old clothes for our own, they bent their course towards a large island at a very great distance, where they sold us.

I was purchased by a rich merchant, who conducted me to his house, gave me food to eat, and clothed me as a slave. Some days after, as he was not well informed who I was, he asked me if I knew any trade. I replied that I was not an artisan, but a merchant by profession, and that the corsairs who had sold me had taken from me all I was possessed of. "But tell me," said he, "do you think you could shoot with a bow and arrow?" I replied that it had been one of my youthful sports, and that I had not entirely forgotten how to use it. He then gave me a bow and some arrows, and making me mount behind him on an elephant, he took me to a vast forest at the distance of some hours' journey from the city. We went a great way in it, and when he came to a spot where he wished to stop, he made me alight. Then showing me a large tree, "Get up in that tree," said he, "and shoot at the elephants that will pass under it, for there is a prodigious quantity in this forest: if one should fall, come and acquaint me of it." Having said this, he left me some provisions and returned to the city: I remained in the tree, on the watch, the whole night.

I did not perceive any during that time; but the next day, as soon as the sun had arisen, a great number made their appearance. I shot many arrows at them, and at last one fell. The others immediately retired, and left me at liberty to go and inform my master of the success I had met with. To reward me for this good intelligence, he regaled me with an excellent repast, and praised my address. We then returned together to the forest, where we dug a pit to bury the elephant I had killed. It was my master's intention to let it rot in the earth, and then to take possession of its teeth for commerce.

I continued this occupation for two months, and not a day passed in which I did not kill an elephant. I did not always place myself on the same tree; sometimes I ascended one, sometimes another. One morning, when I was waiting for some elephants to pass, I perceived, to my great astonishment, that instead of traversing the forest as usual, they stopped and came towards me with a terrible noise, and in such numbers that the ground was covered with them, and trembled under their footsteps. They approached the tree where I was placed, and surrounded it with their trunks extended, having their eyes all fixed upon me. At this surprising spectacle I remained motionless, and so agitated by fright that my bow and arrows fell from my hands.

My fears were not groundless. After the elephants had viewed me for some time, one of the largest twisted his trunk round the body of the tree, and shook it with so much violence that he tore it up by the roots, and threw it on the ground. I fell with the tree; but the animal took me up with his trunk, and placed me on his shoulders, where I remained more dead than alive. He put himself at the head of his companions, who followed him in a troop, and carried me to a spot where, having set me down, he and the rest retired. Conceive my situation! I thought it a dream. At length, having been seated some time, and seeing no other elephants, I rose, and perceived that I was on a little hill of some breadth, entirely covered with bones and teeth of elephants. This sight filled my mind with a variety of reflections. I admired the instinct of these animals, and did not doubt that this was their cemetery or place of burial, and that they had brought me hither to show it me, that I might desist from destroying them, as I did it merely for the sake of possessing their teeth. I did not stay long on the hill, but turned my steps towards the city, and having walked a day and a night, at last arrived at my master's. I did not meet any elephants in my way, which plainly evinced that they had entered farther into the forest, to leave me an unobstructed passage from the hill.

As soon as my master saw me, "Ah! poor Sindbad," exclaimed he, "I was in pain to know what could be become of you. I have been to the forest, and found a tree newly torn up by the roots, and a bow and arrows on the ground: after having sought you everywhere in vain, I despaired of ever seeing you again. Pray relate to me what has happened to you, and by what happy chance you are still alive." I satisfied his curiosity, and the following day, having accompanied me to the hill, he was with great joy convinced of the truth of my history. We loaded the elephant on which we had come, with as many teeth as he could carry, and when we returned, he thus addressed me:—"Brother, for I will no longer treat you as a slave, after the discovery you have imparted to me, and which cannot fail to enrich me, may God pour on you all sorts of blessings and prosperity! Before him I give you your liberty. I had concealed from you what I am now going to relate. The elephants of our forest destroy annually an infinite number of slaves, whom we send in search of ivory. Whatever advice we give them, they are sure, sooner or later, to lose their lives by the wiles of these animals. God has delivered you from their fury, and has conferred this mercy on you alone. It is a sign that he cherishes you, and that he wants you in the world to be of use to mankind. You have procured me a surprising advantage: we have not hitherto been able to get ivory without risking the lives of our slaves, and now our whole city will be enriched by your means. Do not suppose that I think I have sufficiently recompensed you by giving you your liberty; I intend to add to it considerable presents; I might engage the whole city to join and make your fortune, but that is an honour I will enjoy alone."

To this obliging discourse I replied, "Master, God preserve you; the liberty you grant me acquits you of all obligation towards me, and the only recompense I desire for the service I have had the good fortune to procure for you and the inhabitants of your city, is permission to return to my country." "Well," resumed he, "the monsoon will soon bring us vessels, which come to be laden with ivory. I will then send you away with a sufficiency to pay your expenses home." I again thanked him for the liberty he had given me, and for the good will he showed me. I remained with him till the season for the monsoon, during which we made frequent excursions to the hill, and filled his magazines with ivory. All the other merchants in the city did the same, for it did not long remain a secret.

The ships at length arrived, and my master having chosen that in which I was to embark, loaded it with ivory, half of which was on my own account. He did not omit an abundance of provisions for my voyage, and he obliged me to accept some rare curiosities of that country besides. After I had thanked him as much as possible for all the obligations he had conferred on me, I embarked. We set sail, and as the adventure which had procured me liberty was very extraordinary, it was always on my mind.

We touched at several islands to procure refreshments. Our vessel having sailed from a port of the Indian Terra Firma, we went there to land: and fearful of the dangers of the sea to Balsora, I landed the ivory which belonged to me, and resolved to continue my journey by land. I sold my share of the cargo for a large sum of money, and purchased a variety of curious things for presents: when I was equipped, I joined a caravan of merchants. I remained a long time on the road, and suffered a great deal; but I bore all with patience, when I reflected that I had neither tempests nor corsairs, serpents, nor any other peril that I had before encountered, to fear.

All these fatigues being at last concluded, I arrived happily at Bagdad. I went immediately and presented myself to the caliph, and gave him an account of my embassy. This prince told me that my long absence had occasioned

him some uneasiness ; but that he had always hoped that God would not forsake me.

When I related the adventure of the elephants, he appeared much surprised, and would scarcely have believed it, had not my sincerity been well known to him. He thought this, as well as the other histories I had detailed to him, so curious, that he ordered one of his secretaries to write it in letters of gold, to be preserved in his treasury. I retired well satisfied with the presents and honours he conferred on me : and have since resigned myself entirely to my family, my relations, and friends.

Sindbad thus concluded the recital of his seventh and last voyage ; and addressing himself to Hindbad, "Well, my friend," added he, "have you ever heard of one who has suffered more than I have, or been in so many trying situations ? Is it not just that, after so many troubles, I should enjoy an agreeable and quiet life ?" As he finished these words, Hindbad approached him, kissed his hand, and said, "I must confess, sir, that you have encountered frightful perils ; my afflictions are not to be compared with yours. If I feel them heavily at the time I suffer them, I console myself with the small profit which they produce. You not only deserve a quiet life, but are worthy of all the riches you possess, since you make so good a use of them, and are so generous. May you continue to live happily till the hour of your death !"

Sindbad ordered him to have another hundred sequins ; he admitted him to his friendship, told him to quit the profession of a porter, and to continue to eat at his table ; for that he should all his life have reason to remember Sindbad, the sailor.

THE THREE APPLES.

SIRE (said Scheherazadè) I have already had the honour of relating to your majesty one ramble which the Caliph Haroun Alraschid took from his palace. I will now tell you of another.

One day this prince desired his grand vizier Giafar to be with him the following evening. "I wish," said he, "to visit all parts of the city, and make myself acquainted with the opinions generally formed of my officers of justice. If there be any who are deservedly complained of, we will discharge them, and place others in their situation, who will perform their duty more successfully. If, on the contrary, there be any who are praised, we will reward them according to their deserts." The grand vizier having repaired to the palace at the appointed time, the caliph, himself, and Mesrour, the chief of the eunuchs, disguised themselves, that they might not be known, and set out together.

They passed through several squares and many market-places, and coming into a small street, they perceived by the light of the moon a man with a white beard, and of tall stature, carrying nets on his head. He had on his arm a basket, made of palm-leaves, and in his hand a stick. "To see this old man," said the caliph, "one should not suppose him rich ; let us address him, and ask him the state of his fortune." "Good man," said the vizier, "what art thou ?" "My lord," replied the old man, "I am a fisherman, but the poorest and most miserable of my trade. I went out at noon to go and fish, and from that time till now I have taken nothing. And yet I have a wife and young children, but have not sufficient means of supporting them."

The caliph, touched with compassion, said to the fisherman, "Should you have courage to return and throw your nets once more ? We will give you a

hundred sequins for what you bring us." The fisherman, taking the caliph at his word, and forgetting all the troubles of the past day, returned towards the Tigris, in company with him, Giafar and Mesrour, saying to himself, "These gentlemen appear too civil and too reasonable not to recompense me for my pains; and even should they give me only an hundredth part of what they promise me, it will still be a great sum for me."

They arrived on the banks of the river, and the fisherman having thrown his nets, drew out a case well closed, and very heavy. The caliph immediately ordered the vizier to count him his hundred sequins, and discharged him. Mesrour took the case on his shoulders, by order of his master, who, in his curiosity to know what it could contain, returned immediately to the palace. The case being opened, they found a large basket made of palm-leaves, and sewn at the opening with a bit of red worsted. To satisfy the impatience of the caliph, they cut the worsted with a knife, and drew out of the basket a packet, wrapped in a piece of old carpet, and tied with cord. The cord being untied, and the packet undone, to their horror they perceived the body of a young lady, white as molten silver, and cut into pieces. The caliph's astonishment at this dismal spectacle cannot be described; but his surprise was instantly changed to anger, and casting a furious look at the vizier, "Thou dog," cried he, "is this the way thou dost inspect the actions of my people? Assassinations are committed with impunity under thy administration, and my subjects are thrown into the Tigris, that they may rise in vengeance against me on the day of judgment. If you do not speedily revenge the death of this woman by the execution of her murderer, I swear by the holy name of God that I will have you hanged, together with forty of your relations." "Commander of the Faithful," replied the grand vizier, "I entreat your majesty to grant me time to make proper inquiries." "I give you three days," returned the caliph; "take care of yourself."

The vizier Giafar returned home in the greatest confusion. "Alas!" thought he, "how is it possible for me, in so large and vast a city as Bagdad, to discover a murderer, who, no doubt, has committed this crime secretly, and without witness, and has now in all probability fled from the city? Another in my place might perhaps take any wretch out of prison, and have him executed, to satisfy the caliph, but I will not charge my conscience with such a deed; I will rather die than save my life on such terms."

He ordered the officers of police and justice, who were under his command, to make a strict search for the criminal. They not only sent out their dependants, but went themselves on this affair, which was no less interesting to them than to the vizier. But all their diligence was fruitless; they could discover no traces by which to apprehend the perpetrator of the murder, and the vizier concluded that his death was inevitable without the interference of Heaven.

On the third day, an officer of the sultan's came to the house of this unhappy minister, and summoned him to follow. The vizier obeyed, and the caliph having inquired of him for the murderer, he replied, with tears in his eyes, "O, Commander of the Faithful, I have found no one who could give me any intelligence concerning him." The caliph reproached him in the most angry terms, and commanded him to be hanged before the gates of the palace, together with forty of the Barmecides, (a noble family of Persian origin.)

Whilst they were preparing the gibbets, and the officers went to seize the forty Barmecides at their different houses, a public crier was ordered by the caliph to proclaim in all the quarters of the city, that "Whoever wished to have the satisfaction of seeing the grand vizier Giafar, and forty of his family, the Barmecides, hanged, was to repair to the square before the palace."

When everything was ready, the criminal judge, and a great number of

attendants and guards belonging to the palace, conducted the grand vizier, together with the forty Barmecides, each under the gibbet that was destined for him, and passed the cord round his neck by which they were to be elevated. The people who crowded the square could not be present at such a spectacle without feeling pity and shedding tears; for the vizier Giafar and his relations, the Barmecides, were much beloved for their probity, liberality, and disinterestedness, not only at Bagdad, but throughout the whole empire of the caliph.

Everything was ready for this barbarous execution, when a young man, of comely appearance, and well dressed, pressed through the crowd till he reached the grand vizier; having kissed his hand, "Sovereign vizier," said he, addressing Giafar, "chief of the emirs of this court, the refuge of the poor, you are not guilty of the crime for which you are going to suffer. Let me, therefore, expiate the death of the lady who was thrown into the Tigris, for I am her murderer, and I alone ought to be punished."

Despite his joy, the vizier nevertheless felt pity for a youth whose countenance, far from expressing guilt, had something engaging in it; he was going to reply, when a tall man, of an advanced age, having also pushed through the crowd, came up, and said to the vizier, "My lord, do not believe what this young man says to you. I was the only person that killed the lady; I only am to be punished. In the name of God, I conjure you not to confuse the innocent with the guilty." "My lord," interrupted the young man, addressing himself to the vizier, "I assure you that it was I who committed this wicked action, and that no person in the world is my accomplice." "Alas! my son," replied the old man, "despair has led thee hither, and thou wouldst anticipate thy destiny; as for me, it is a long time that I have lived in this world, I ought to quit it without regret; let me sacrifice my life to save thine. My lord," continued he, addressing the vizier, "I repeat it, I am the assassin; sentence me to death, and do not defer it."

The contest between the old man and the youth compelled the vizier Giafar to conduct them before the caliph, with the permission of the attending officer of justice, who was happy in an opportunity of obliging him.

When he was arrived in the presence of the sovereign, he kissed the ground seven times, and then spoke in these terms: "Commander of the Faithful, I bring to you this old man, and this youth, each of whom avers himself to be the murderer of the lady." The caliph then asked the accused, which of the two had murdered the lady in so cruel a manner, and then thrown her into the Tigris. The youth assured him that he had committed the deed; the old man sustained the contrary. "Go," said the caliph to the vizier, "give orders for them both to be hanged." "But, sire," replied the vizier, "if one only is criminal, it would be unjust to execute the other."

At these words, the young man replied, "I swear by the great God, who has elevated the heavens to where they now are, that it is I who killed the lady, who cut her in pieces, and then threw her into the Tigris four days since. I do not hope for mercy on the day of judgment, if what I say be not true; therefore, I am the person who is to be punished." The caliph was surprised at this solemn oath, which he was inclined to believe, as the old man made no reply. Therefore, turning to the youth, "Unhappy wretch," cried he, "for what reason hast thou committed this detestable crime? and what motive canst thou have for coming to offer thyself for execution?" "Commander of the Faithful," returned he, "if all that has passed between this lady and myself could be written, it would form a history, which might be serviceable to mankind." "Relate it then," replied the caliph; "I bid you do so." The young man obeyed, and began in these words:—

THE HISTORY OF THE LADY WHO WAS MURDERED, AND OF THE YOUNG MAN HER HUSBAND.

SOVEREIGN of the Believers, I must inform your majesty that the lady who was massacred was my wife, and daughter to this old man whom you see, and who is my uncle on my father's side. She was only twelve years of age when he bestowed her on me in marriage, and eleven years are passed since that period. I have three sons by her, who are still alive, and must do her the justice to say that she never gave me the least subject for displeasure. She was prudent and virtuous, and her greatest pleasure consisted in making me happy. On my part, I loved her with the truest affection, and anticipated all her wishes instead of opposing them.

About two months since she was taken ill; I treated her with all possible care, and spared no pains to complete her cure: at the expiration of a month she grew better, and wished to go to the bath. Before she went out of the house, she said to me, "Cousin," for that was my familiar appellation, "I wish to eat some apples; you will oblige me very much if you could procure me some. For a long time I have had this desire, and I must confess that it is now increased to such a degree that, if I be not gratified, I fear some misfortune will be the consequence." "Most willingly," I replied, "I will do all in my power to content you."

I immediately went in search of some apples into all the markets and shops I could think of; but I could not obtain one, although I offered to pay a sequin for it. I returned home much vexed at having taken so much trouble to no purpose. As for my wife, when she came back from the bath and did not see any apples, she was so chagrined that she could not sleep all night. I arose early the next morning, and went into all the gardens, but with no better success than on the preceding day. I only met with an old gardener, who told me, that whatever pains I might take, I should not meet with any excepting in your majesty's gardens at Balsora.

As I was passionately fond of my wife, and I would not have to reproach myself with having neglected any means of satisfying her longing, I put on the dress of a traveller, and having informed her of my intention, I set out for Balsora. I travelled with such despatch that I returned to her at the end of a fortnight. I brought with me three apples, which had cost me a sequin apiece. There were no more in the garden, and the gardener would not sell them at a lower price. When I arrived I presented them to my wife; but her longing was then over; so she received them and only placed them by her side. She nevertheless continued ill, and I knew not what remedy to apply for her disorder.

A few days after my return, being in my shop at the public place where all sorts of fine stuffs are sold, I saw a tall black slave enter, holding an apple in his hand which I knew to be one of those I had brought from Balsora. I could have no doubts on the subject, for I knew that there were none in Bagdad nor in any of the gardens in the environs. "My good slave," said I, "pray tell me where you got that apple." "It is a present," replied he, smiling, "that my mistress made me. I have been to see her to day, and found her unwell. I saw three apples by her side and asked her where she had got them, and she told me that her husband had been a journey of fifteen days on purpose to get them for her. We breakfasted together, and when I came away I brought this with me."

This intelligence enraged me beyond measure. I got up, and having shut my shop, I ran home eagerly and went into the chamber of my wife. I looked

for the apples, and seeing but two, I inquired what was become of the third. My wife then turning her head towards the side where the apples were, and perceiving that there were only two, replied coldly, "I do not know what is become of it, cousin." This answer convinced me of the truth of what the slave had spoken. I suffered myself to be transported by a fit of jealousy, and drawing a knife which hung from my girdle, I plunged it into the breast of this unhappy woman. I then cut off her head and divided her body into quarters; I made a packet of it, which I concealed in a folding basket, and after having sewed the opening of the basket with some red worsted, I inclosed it in a chest, and as soon as it was night, carried it on my shoulders to the Tigris, where I threw it in.

My two youngest children were in bed and asleep, and the third was from home. On my return I found him sitting at the door weeping bitterly. I asked him the reason of his tears. "Father," said he, "this morning I took away from my mother without her perceiving me, one of the three apples you brought her. I kept it some time; but as I was playing with it in the street with my little brothers, a great black slave who was passing snatched it out of my hand and took it away with him. I ran after him, asking him for it; I told him that it belonged to my mother, who was ill, and that you had been a journey of fifteen days to procure it for her. All was useless, for he would not return it, and as I went on crying after him, he turned back and beat me, and then ran off as fast as he could through so many winding streets that I lost sight of him. Since then I have been walking out of the city waiting for your return. I was staying here for you, father, to beg that you will not tell my mother, lest it should make her worse." On finishing these words he redoubled his tears.

This relation from my son plunged me into the deepest affliction. I saw the enormity of my crime, and repented, but too late, of having given credit to the imposture of the wicked slave, who, from what he had collected from my son, had composed the diabolical fable which I received as a truth. My uncle, who is now present, arrived at that moment. He came to see his daughter; but instead of finding her alive, he learnt from my lips that she was no more, for I disguised nothing from him, and without waiting for his condemnation, I accused myself as the most criminal of men. Nevertheless, instead of pouring forth the reproaches I so justly deserved, this good man mingled his tears with mine, and we wept together three whole days; he for the loss of a daughter he had always tenderly loved, I for that of a wife who was dear to me, and of whom I had deprived myself in so cruel a manner by giving credit to the false testimony of a lying slave.

This, Sovereign of the Faithful, is the sincere confession which your majesty required of me; you know the extent of my crime, and I humbly supplicate you to give orders for my punishment; however rigorous it may be, I shall not murmur at it, but esteem it too light.

At this the caliph was in great astonishment; but this equitable prince finding that the youth was more to be pitied than blamed, began to take his part. "The action of this young man," said he, "is excusable in the sight of God, and may be pardoned by man. The wicked slave is the sole cause of this murder; he is the only one who ought to be punished; therefore," continued he, addressing the vizier, "I give you three days to find him; if you do not produce him by that time, your life shall be the forfeit instead of his."

The unhappy Giasfar, who had congratulated himself on his safety, was again overwhelmed with despair on hearing this new decree of the caliph; but as he did not dare to reply to his sovereign, with whose disposition he

was well acquainted, he went out of his presence, and returned to his house with his eyes bathed in tears, and persuaded that he had only three days to live. He was so convinced that it was impossible to find the slave, that he did not even seek him. "It is not possible," cried he, "that in such a city as Bagdad, where there is such an infinite number of black slaves, I should ever be able to discover the one in question. If God do not reveal him to me, as he did the assassin, nothing can possibly save me."

He passed the first two days in affliction with his family, who murmured bitterly at the rigour of the caliph. On the third day he prepared for death with firmness, and like a minister who had ever acted with integrity and had done nothing with which to reproach himself. He sent for the *cadi* and other witnesses, who signed the will he made in their presence. After that he embraced his wife and children, and bid them a last farewell. All his family melted into tears; and never was there a more affecting spectacle. At length an officer of the palace arrived, who told him that the caliph was much displeased at not having heard from him about the black slave whom he had commanded him to search for. "I am ordered," continued he, "to bring you to the foot of the throne." The afflicted vizier prepared to follow the officer; but as he was going, his youngest daughter was brought to him. She was five or six years old, and the women who had the care of her came with her, to take leave of her father.

As he was particularly fond of this daughter, he entreated the officer to allow him a few minutes to speak to her. He approached the child, and taking her in his arms kissed her several times. In kissing her, he perceived she had something large in her bosom which had a strong smell. "My dear child," said he, "what have you in your bosom?" "My dear father," replied she, "it is an apple on which is written the name of the caliph, our lord and master. *Rihan*, our slave, sold it me for two sequins."

At the words "apple" and "slave" the grand vizier *Giafar* made an exclamation through surprise and joy, and immediately took the apple from the child's bosom. He ordered the slave to be called, and when he came into his presence, "*Rascal*," said he, "where didst thou get this apple?" "My lord," replied the slave, "I swear to you that I have not stolen it either from your garden or from that of the Commander of the Faithful."

"The other day, as I was passing through a street where there were three or four children at play, one of them had this apple in his hand, and I took it away from him. The child ran after me, saying that it did not belong to him, but to his mother, who was ill; that his father, to gratify her longing, had gone to a great distance to procure it, and had brought her three; that this was one which he had taken without his mother's knowing it. He entreated me to return it, but I would not attend to him, and brought the apple home, after which I sold it to the little lady, your daughter, for two sequins. This is all I have to say."

Giafar could not help wondering that the roguery of a slave should have caused the death of an innocent woman and nearly deprived himself of life. He took the slave with him, and when he had reached the palace he related to the caliph what the slave had confessed, and the chance by which he discovered the crime.

The astonishment of the caliph cannot be equalled; he could not contain himself, and burst into violent fits of laughter. At last, having resumed a serious air, he said to the vizier, that since his slave had occasioned so much confusion, he merited an exemplary punishment. "Sire," replied the vizier, "I cannot deny it, yet his crime is not inexcusable. I know a history far more surprising, of a vizier of Cairo, called *Noureddin Ali*, and *Bedreddin*

Hassan of Balsora. As your majesty takes pleasure in hearing such stories, I am ready to relate it to you, provided that if you find it more wonderful than the circumstance which occasions me to tell it, you will remit the punishment of my slave." "With all my heart," returned the caliph; "but you have undertaken a great enterprise, and I do not think you can save your slave, for the story of the apples is a most extraordinary one." Giafar then began his story in these words :—

THE HISTORY OF NOUREDDIN ALI AND BEDREDDIN HASSAN.

COMMANDER of the Faithful, there was formerly a sultan in Egypt, who was a great observer of justice; he was merciful, beneficent, and liberal, and his valour made him the terror of the neighbouring states. He provided for the poor, and protected men of learning, whom he raised to the first employment in his state. His vizier was a prudent, wise, and penetrating man, skilled in literature and all the sciences. This minister had two sons, handsome in person, and resembling their father in talents. The eldest was named Schemseddin Mohammed, and the youngest Nouredin Ali. This last in particular possessed as much merit as can fall to the lot of any individual. The vizier, their father, dying, the sultan sent for them, and having put on each the dress of a common vizier, "I regret your father's death," said he, "and feel sincerely for your loss; and as I wish to prove it to you, I invest each of you with the same dignity, for I know you live together, and are perfectly united. Go, and imitate your father."

The two new viziers thanked the sultan for the favour he had conferred on them; and returned home to order their father's funeral. When a month was expired, they made their appearance in public; and went for the first time to the council of the sultan, after which they continued to attend regularly every day that it assembled. Whenever the sultan had a hunting-party, one of the brothers accompanied him; and they partook of this honour alternately. One evening, on the morrow of which the eldest brother was to be of the sultan's hunting-party, they were talking after supper on different subjects, when Schemseddin Mohammed said to Nouredin, "Brother, as we are not yet married, and live in such harmony, a thought has occurred to me. Let us both be married on the same day, and to two sisters, whom we will choose out of some family, whose rank is equal to our own. What think you of this proposal?" "I think, brother," replied Nouredin Ali, "that it is worthy of the friendship that unites us. You could not have arranged a better plan, and I am ready to do whatever you wish in it." "Oh," resumed the eldest, "this is not all; my imagination goes much further. Suppose that our wives become pregnant on the first night of our marriage, and that they afterwards produce on the same day, your wife a son, and mine a daughter, we will unite them when they are of a proper age." "Ah!" exclaimed his brother, "this is indeed an admirable project. This marriage will complete our union, and I readily give my consent. But, brother," added he, "if it happens that this marriage takes place, should you expect my son to settle a fortune on your daughter?" "In that there is no difficulty," replied the other, "and I am persuaded, that besides the usual agreements in a marriage contract, you would not object to give in her name at least three thousand sequins, three good estates, and three slaves." "That I cannot agree to," returned Nouredin. "Are not we brothers and colleagues, each invested with the same dignity and title? Besides, do not we both know what is just? The male being more

noble than the female, ought not you to bestow a large portion on your daughter? I perceive you are a man who wishes to enrich himself at other people's expense."

Although Nouredin Ali had said these words in joke; yet his brother, who was not of a good temper, was highly offended. "Misery attend your son!" said he, angrily, "since you dare to prefer him to my daughter. I am surprised that you should have the impertinence only to suppose him worthy of her. You must have lost your senses to make yourself my equal, by saying that we are colleagues; know, that after such insolence, I would not marry my daughter to your son, even if you were to give her more riches than you are possessed of." This strange quarrel between the brothers about the marriage of children who were not yet born, did not cease here. Schemseddin Mohammed went so far as to use menaces. "If I were not obliged," said he, "to accompany the sultan to-morrow, I would treat you as you deserve; but on my return I will show you if it becomes the younger brother to speak to the elder in the insolent manner in which you have addressed me." At these words he retired to his apartment, and his brother did the same.

Schemseddin Mohammed arose very early the next morning, and repaired to the palace; from whence he went out with the sultan, who directed his course above Cairo, towards the pyramids. As for Nouredin Ali, he passed the night in great distress; and having well considered that it was not possible for him to remain any longer with a brother who had treated him with such contempt, he resolved to quit the house. He prepared a good mule, furnished himself with money, precious stones, and some eatables; and having told his people that he was going a journey of three or four days, in which he wished to be alone, he departed.

When he had left Cairo, he went over the desert towards Arabia; but his mule becoming lame on the road, he was obliged to continue his journey on foot. He had the good fortune to be overtaken by a courier who was going to Balsora, and who took him up behind him. When they were arrived at Balsora, Nouredin Ali alighted, and thanked the courier for the favour he had done him. As he walked along the streets seeking for a lodging, he saw a person of great quality and distinction coming, accompanied by a numerous train, to whom all the inhabitants paid great respect, by waiting to let him pass; and Nouredin Ali stopped like the rest. It was the grand vizier of the sultan of Balsora, who was parading the city to preserve peace and good order by his presence.

This minister having by chance cast his eyes on the young man, was struck with his engaging countenance; he looked on him pleasantly, and as he passed near him, perceiving that he was in the dress of a traveller, he stopped to ask him who he was, and from whence he came. "My lord," replied Nouredin Ali, "I am from Egypt, and born at Cairo. I have quitted my country on account of a quarrel with one of my relations, and I have resolved to travel over the whole world, and to die rather than return." The grand vizier, who was a venerable old man, having heard these words, replied, "My son, do not put in execution the project you have formed. In this world there is nothing but misery; and you little think what pains you will have to endure. Rather come with me, and perhaps I can make you forget the grievance which has obliged you to abandon your country."

Nouredin Ali followed the grand vizier of Balsora, who soon became so well acquainted with his good qualities, that he conceived a great affection for him. One day, when they were alone together, he thus addressed him: "My son, I am, as you see, so far advanced in years, that there is no prospect of my living much longer. Heaven has given me an only daughter, who is as hand-

some as yourself, and now of a marriageable age. Many of the most powerful lords of this court have already asked her for their sons, yet I never could bring myself to part with her. But I love you, and think you so worthy of being allied to my family, that I am willing to accept you as my son-in-law, in preference to all who have applied. If you receive this offer with pleasure, I will acquaint the sultan, my master, that I have adopted you by this marriage, and I will entreat him to grant me the reversion of my appointment as grand vizier of Balsora, at the same time, since I wish for a little rest from business in my old age."

The grand vizier had no sooner finished these words, than Noureddin Ali threw himself at his feet, and declared, in terms which proclaimed his joy and gratitude, that he was ready to do anything that he would dictate. The grand vizier then called the principal officers of his household, and ordered them to prepare the great saloon in his house for a grand entertainment: he then sent invitations to all the grantees of the court as well as of the city, to favour him with their company. When they were all assembled, as Noureddin Ali had made him acquainted with his rank, he thus addressed them: "My lords, I am happy to inform you of a circumstance which I have hitherto kept secret. I have a brother, who is grand vizier of the sultan of Egypt, as I have the honour to be grand vizier to the sultan of these dominions. This brother of mine has an only son, whom he would not marry at the court of Egypt, and he has sent him hither to be united to my daughter, that the two branches might be thus joined together. This son whom I recognised as my nephew on his arrival, and whom I am going to make my son-in-law, is this young nobleman, whom I have the pleasure of introducing to you. I flatter myself you will do him the honour of being present at the nuptials, which I intend shall be solemnized this day. All expressed their approbation of the marriage of the vizier's daughter with Noureddin Ali, and they then sat down to table, where they remained a considerable time. Towards the end of the repast the confectionery was served, and each one, as is the custom, having taken as much as he wished to carry away, the cadis entered with the marriage contract in their hands. The principal grantees signed it, after which the whole company retired.

When no one remained but the people belonging to the house, the grand vizier desired those who had the care of the bath to conduct Noureddin Ali thither. He found it provided with new linen of a beautiful fineness and whiteness, as well as with every other necessary. When the bridegroom had been well washed and rubbed, he was going to put on the same dress he had pulled off, but another of the greatest magnificence was presented to him in its place. Thus adorned and perfumed with the most exquisite odours, he returned to the grand vizier, his father-in-law, who was charmed with his appearance; and placing him by his side, "My son," said he, "you have disclosed to me who you are, and the rank you held at the Egyptian court; you have also told me that you had a quarrel with your brother, for which reason you left your country; I entreat you to relate to me the subject of your difference, for you must now place an entire confidence in, and conceal nothing from me."

Noureddin Ali recounted all the circumstances relative to his dispute with his brother, at which the grand vizier could not refrain from laughing very heartily. "This is indeed," said he, "the strangest thing I ever heard of! Is it possible, that your quarrel was carried to such a height merely for an imaginary wedding? I am sorry that you quarrelled with your elder brother for such a trifle; however, I perceive that he was in the wrong to be offended with what you said merely in joke, and I ought to be thankful to Heaven that this difference between you has been the means of procuring me a son-in-law

such as you. But," continued the old man, "the night is advancing, and it is time for you to retire. Go, my daughter is expecting your arrival. To-morrow I will present you to the sultan, and I flatter myself he will receive you in a way to satisfy us both."

Noureddin Ali left his father-in-law to repair to the chamber of his bride. What is very remarkable (continued the grand vizier Giafar) is, that on the same day that these nuptials were celebrated at Balsora, Schemseddin Mohammed was married at Cairo, in the manner I am going to relate.

After Noureddin Ali had left Cairo with the intention of never revisiting it, Schemseddin Mahommed, his elder brother, who was gone with the sultan on the hunting-party, returning at the end of a month (for the sultan, being passionately fond of hunting, had been absent thus long), ran into the apartment of Noureddin Ali; but what was his surprise on being informed that he had left Cairo under pretence of making a journey of four or five days; that he set off on a mule on the very day of the hunting-party of the sultan; and that since that time he had never been seen or heard of. Schemseddin was the more chagrined at this intelligence, as he accused himself of having been the cause of his brother's absenting himself, by the harsh words which had passed between them. He despatched a courier, who passed through Damascus and went on to Aleppo; but Noureddin Ali was at that time at Balsora. When the courier returned without bringing any tidings of him, Schemseddin Mohammed determined to send in other parts to seek for him, but in the mean time he formed the design of marrying. He made choice of the daughter of one of the most powerful grandees of Cairo, and was united to her on the same day that his brother married the daughter of the grand vizier of Balsora.

But this is not all (continued Giafar); I will now tell you, Commander of the Faithful, what happened afterwards. At the expiration of nine months, the wife of Schemseddin Mohammed was delivered of a daughter at Cairo, and on the same day the wife of Noureddin Ali at Balsora brought into the world a boy, who was named Bedreddin Hassan. The grand vizier of Balsora testified his joy by great presents and public rejoicings which he ordered on the birth of his grandson. He afterwards, to prove his affection for Noureddin Ali, went to the palace to entreat the sultan to grant him the reversion of his office, that he might have the satisfaction before he died of seeing his son-in-law in his place.

The sultan, who had seen Noureddin Ali immediately after his marriage, and had heard him spoken of favourably since that time, readily granted the favour which was requested of him, and he ordered him to be robed in his presence in the dress of grand vizier.

The happiness of the father-in-law was complete when he saw Noureddin Ali preside at the council in his place, and perform all the functions of grand vizier. Noureddin Ali acquitted himself so well that he appeared to have exercised that office all his life. He continued to assist at the council whenever the infirmities of age would not allow his father-in-law to be present. This good old man died four years after this marriage, with the satisfaction of seeing a branch of his family who promised to sustain the honour and credit of it.

Noureddin Ali performed the last duties to his father-in-law with the greatest kindness and gratitude, and as soon as Bedreddin Hassan, his son, had reached the age of seven years, he placed him under the tuition of an excellent master, who began his education in a way suitable to his birth and to the quick and penetrating understanding he already displayed.

In the course of two years Bedreddin had learnt to read, and was also acquainted with the Koran by heart. Noureddin Ali, his father, then procured him other masters, by which he made such a rapid progress in his studies that

at the age of twelve years he was no longer in need of their assistance. By that time, as the features of his countenance were fully formed, he became the admiration of all who saw him.

Till then Noureddin Ali had only sought to make him study, and had not brought him out into the world. He now took him to the palace, in order to have the honour of introducing him to the sultan, who received him very favourably. The people in the streets, who saw him as he went along, were so struck with his beauty that they uttered a thousand benedictions and exclamations of surprise.

As his father wished to make him capable of being equal one day to fill the situation he himself held, he spared nothing to qualify him for it, and by making him enter into affairs of the most difficult nature, he prepared him early for that kind of employment. In short, he neglected nothing that could tend to the advancement of a son whom he tenderly loved, and he began to enjoy the fruits of his trouble when he was suddenly attacked by a disease so violent that he was sensible his end was approaching. He therefore did not flatter himself with the hopes of recovery, but prepared to die like a good Mussulman. In these precious moments he did not forget his beloved son Bedreddin; he ordered him to be called to his bedside, and thus addressed him: "My son, you see that this world is perishable; that only to which I am shortly going is eternal. You must from this moment begin to adopt the sentiments I now feel, and prepare to take this journey without regret, your conscience acquitting you of having neglected any of the duties of a Mussulman or of an honest man. With regard to your religion, you have been sufficiently instructed in that by the masters you have had, as well as by what you have read. As to what relates to an honest man, I will now give you some advice, from which I hope you will endeavour to profit. As it is in the first place necessary to know yourself, and you cannot possibly have that knowledge without knowing who I am, I will now inform you.

"I was born in Egypt," continued he; "my father was prime minister to the sultan of those dominions. I too had the honour of being one of the viziers of the same sultan jointly with my brother, your uncle, who I believe is still alive, and is called Schemseddin Mohammed. I was under the necessity of separating from him, and I came into this country, where I reached the rank which I have till now enjoyed. But you will be made acquainted with a fuller detail of these circumstances by a packet which I shall give you."

Noureddin Ali then took out the packet, which he had written with his own hand, and which he always carried about him, and giving it to Bedreddin Hassan, "Take it," said he; "you will read it at your leisure. You will find in it, among other things, the day of my marriage and that of your birth. These are circumstances which may be useful to you in the end, and you must therefore carefully preserve it." Bedreddin Hassan, truly afflicted at seeing his father in such a state, and sensibly touched by this discourse, received the packet with tears in his eyes, promising never to let it go out of his possession.

At this instant Noureddin Ali was seized with a fainting-fit, which it was feared would terminate his existence; he recovered, however, and continuing to address his son, "The first maxim I wish to impress on your mind," said he, "is not to hold intercourse with any kind of persons. The way to live in safety is to be reserved, and not be too communicative.

"The second is not to commit violence on any one; for were you to do so, all the world would revolt against you; and you must regard the world as a creditor to whom you owe moderation, compassion, and toleration.

"The third, never to reply when you are spoken to in anger. 'He is out of danger,' says the proverb, 'who remains silent.' On such occasions in

particular you should attend to this. You know also what one of our poets has written on this subject: 'Silence is the ornament and safeguard of life; we should not, by talking too much, resemble the stormy rain, which spoils everything.' We never repent of having been silent, but often regret having spoken.

"The fourth is not to drink wine, for it is the source of all vice.

"The fifth, to manage your fortune with economy; if you do not spend it extravagantly, you will have what is necessary to assist you in case of need. You must not, however, save too much, and become a miser. If you have but a little, and yet spend that little with propriety, you will gain many friends; but if, on the contrary, you possess great riches, and do not make a proper use of them, every one will despise and abandon you."

Noureddin Ali continued giving this kind of advice to his son till the last moment of his life; and when he died, he was interred with all the honours due to his rank and dignity. Bedreddin Hassan of Balsora, for thus he was named from his being born in that town, was inconsolable at the death of his father. Instead of one month, as is the custom, he passed two in his retreat, to give way to his sorrow, during which time he would not see any one nor even go out to pay his respects to the sultan, who being displeased with this neglect, which he considered as a mark of contempt towards him and his court, suffered his anger to rise to a great height. He summoned the new grand vizier whom he had elected to supply the place of Noureddin Ali, and ordered him to go to the house of the deceased and to confiscate it, together with all his other houses, grounds, and effects, without leaving anything for Bedreddin Hassan, whose person also he desired to be seized.

The grand vizier, accompanied by a number of the officers of the palace, immediately set out to execute his commission. One of the slaves of Bedreddin Hassan, who had by chance joined the crowd, no sooner learnt the intention of the grand vizier, than he hastened to warn his master of the danger. He found him seated in the vestibule of his house in as deep affliction as if his father was but just dead. He threw himself at his feet, quite out of breath, and after having kissed the bottom of his robe, "Fly, my lord," cried he, "fly quickly!" "What is the matter?" inquired Bedreddin, raising his head; "what news hast thou?" "My lord," replied the slave, "you have not a moment to lose. The sultan is enraged against you, and they are now coming by his order to confiscate all your possessions, and even to seize your person."

This intelligence of his faithful and affectionate slave occasioned Bedreddin some perplexity. "But," said he, "cannot I return and take at least some money and jewels?" "My dear lord," replied the slave, "the grand vizier will be here in a moment. Depart instantly and make your escape." Bedreddin Hassan immediately got up from the sofa on which he was sitting, he put on his slippers; then covering his head with one corner of his robe to conceal his face, he fled without knowing where to turn his steps to avoid the danger which threatened him. The first thought that occurred was to reach the nearest gate of the city. He ran without stopping till he came to the public cemetery, and as night was approaching, determined to pass it near his father's tomb. This was a large edifice of a magnificent appearance, built in the shape of a dome, which Noureddin Ali had erected during his lifetime. But Bedreddin on his way met with a Jew, who was very rich, and a banker and merchant by profession; he was returning to the city from a place where he had been on business.

This Jew, who was called Isaac, knowing Bedreddin Hassan, stopped and saluted him very respectfully; after having kissed his hand, he said, "My lord, may I take the liberty of asking you where you are going at this hour alone and in appearance so agitated? Is there anything that afflicts you?"

"Yes," replied Bedreddin, "I fell asleep just now, and my father appeared to me in a dream. He had a dreadful countenance, as if he had been very angry with me. I awoke much terrified, and set off immediately to come and pray at his tomb." "My lord," replied the Jew, who did not know the real cause of Bedreddin's quitting the city, "as the late grand vizier, your father and my lord of happy memory, had several vessels laden with merchandise, which are still at sea and now belong to you, I entreat you to grant me the preference over any other merchant. I am in a situation to purchase for ready money the cargoes of all your vessels, and as a proof of what I say, if you approve of it, I will give you a thousand sequins for the first which arrives in port. I have them here in a purse, and am ready to advance them." Saying this he drew out from under his robe a large purse sealed with his seal, which he showed him.

Bedreddin Hassan, situated as he was, forced to fly from his home and robbed of everything he possessed, looked upon this proposition of the Jew as a favour from Heaven, and accepted the offer with great joy. "My lord," said the Jew, "you grant me then the cargo of the first of your vessels that arrives for one thousand sequins?" "Yes," replied Bedreddin, "I do; the bargain is made." The Jew then put the purse of sequins into his hands, at the same time offering to count them; but Bedreddin spared him the trouble by saying he trusted in his honour. "Well then, my lord," resumed the Jew, "will you have the goodness to write a little agreement of the bargain we have made?" He then pulled out from his girdle an inkhorn, and having taken a cane prepared for writing, he presented it to him with a bit of paper which he found in his pocket-book, and while he held the ink, Bedreddin wrote these words:

"This writing is to witness that Bedreddin Hassan of Balsora has sold the cargo of the first of his ships which makes this port, to the Jew Isaac, for the sum of one thousand sequins received.

• "BEDREDDIN HASSAN OF BALSORA."

Having written this, he gave it to the Jew, who put it in his pocket-book, and they separated, Isaac pursuing his way to the city, and Bedreddin Hassan that which led to the tomb of his father. When he had reached it, he prostrated himself with his face towards the earth, and, bathed in tears, began to lament his miserable fate. "Alas!" said he, "unfortunate Bedreddin, what will become of thee? Whither wilt thou go to seek an asylum from the unjust prince who persecutes thee? Was it not affliction enough to lose a father so dear? Why would fortune add another grief to those thou hadst already suffered?" He remained a considerable time in this state, but at length he arose, and leaning his head on his father's sepulchre, he renewed his lamentations, and continued to weep and sigh until, overtaken by sleep, he laid himself down on the pavement, where he fell into a gentle slumber.

He scarcely tasted the sweets of repose when a Genius who had chosen this cemetery as his retreat during the day, preparing to begin his nightly excursions, perceived this young man in the tomb of Nouredin Ali. He entered, and as Bedreddin lay on his back, he was struck with admiration of his beauty; and having examined him attentively for some time, he said to himself, "To judge of this creature by his countenance, it can only be an angel sent by God from the terrestrial paradise to inflame the world with his beauty." After he had considered him again, he rose into the air, where by chance he met a fairy. They saluted each other; after which he said, "I entreat you to descend with me to the cemetery where I live, and I will show you a prodigy in beauty, who is no less worthy of your admiration than of mine." The fairy consented, and

they both instantly descended. When they were in the tomb, the Genius showing her Bedreddin, "Well," said he, "did you ever see so handsome a youth as this?"

The fairy examined Bedreddin attentively, then turning towards the Genius, "I confess," replied she, "that he is very well made, but I have just seen at Cairo an object still more wonderful; and will tell you something concerning it if you will attend to me." "That I will with pleasure," replied the Genius. "You must know then," resumed the fairy, "for I shall begin from an early date, that the sultan of Egypt has a vizier, named Schemseddin Mohammed, and he has a daughter about twenty years of age. She is the most beautiful and perfect creature that was ever beheld. The sultan, hearing from every one of the extraordinary beauty of this young lady, sent for the vizier, her father, a few days since, and said to him, 'I understand you have a daughter, who is marriageable, and I wish to make her my wife; will not you give your consent?' The vizier, who did not at all expect such a proposal, was rather disconcerted; but he was not dazzled by the prospect of such a match for his daughter; and instead of accepting the offer with joy, as many in his place would have done, he replied to the sultan, 'Sire, I am not worthy of the honour your majesty would confer on me, and I humbly entreat you not to be displeased that I should oppose your design. You know that I had a brother called Nouredin Ali, who, as well as myself, had the honour of being one of your viziers. We had a quarrel together, which was the cause of his suddenly disappearing, and I have never heard of him since that time till within these four days, when I learnt that he is lately dead at Balsora, where he enjoyed the dignity of grand vizier to the sultan of that kingdom. He has left one son, and as we formerly agreed to marry our children if ever we had any, to each other, I am persuaded that when he died he continued in the same design. For this reason I wish, on my part, to perform my promise; and I supplicate your majesty to permit me to do so. There are many nobles in this court who have daughters as well as myself, and whom you can honour with your alliance.'

"The sultan of Egypt was extremely irritated by the refusal of Schemseddin Mohammed, and said to him in a transport of anger, which he could not suppress, 'Is it thus you return the goodness with which I condescended to propose my alliance with your family? I shall know how to revenge myself for the preference you have the assurance to show to another; and I swear to you that your daughter shall have no other husband than the lowest and most ill-looking of my slaves.' Saying this he dismissed the vizier, who returned home full of confusion and much mortified.

"To-day the sultan ordered one of his grooms to be brought to him, who is very much deformed, and so ugly, that it is impossible to look at him without disgust; and after having commanded Schemseddin Mohammed to give his consent to the marriage of his daughter with this horrible slave, he had the contract drawn up, and signed by witnesses in his presence. The preparations for these curious nuptials are now completed, and at this moment all the slaves of the grandees of the Egyptian court are at the door of a bath, each with a torch in his hand; they are waiting for hunchback, the groom, who is in the bath, to come out, that they may lead him to his bride, who is already dressed for his reception. At the time I left Cairo the ladies were assembled to conduct her, in her nuptial ornaments, to the hall, where she is to receive her deformed bridegroom, and where she is now expecting him. I saw her, and assure you that it is impossible to view her without admiration."

When the fairy had ceased speaking, the Genius replied that he could not believe it possible for the beauty of this damsel to surpass that of the youth before them. "I will not dispute with you," said the fairy; "I will only say

that he deserves to marry the charming lady who is destined for the groom ; and I think we should perform an action worthy of ourselves were we to oppose the injustice of the sultan, and to substitute this young man for the slave." "You reason justly," resumed the Genius, "and you cannot conceive how much I admire you for this idea ; I consent ; let us counteract the vengeance of the sultan, console an afflicted father, and make his daughter as happy as she now conceives herself to be miserable. I will omit nothing to make this project succeed, and I am persuaded that on your part you will not be sparing in your exertions ; I take upon me to carry this youth to Cairo without waking him, and I leave to you the care of the disposal of him after we have executed our enterprise."

After the Genius and the fairy had concerted together what they should do, the former gently raised Bedreddin, and transported him through the air with an inconceivable swiftness, and placed him at the door of a public apartment adjoining the bath from whence the groom was to come, accompanied by the slaves who were waiting for him.

Bedreddin Hassan, awaking at this instant, was much astonished to find himself in a city he was not acquainted with ; and was going to inquire where he was, when the Genius gave him a gentle tap on the shoulder, and warned him not to speak a word ; then putting a torch in his hand, "Go," said he to him, "and mix with the people whom you see at the door of that bath, and walk with them till you come to a hall, where a wedding is going to be celebrated. You will easily distinguish the bridegroom by his being deformed. Place your self on his right hand when you enter, and open now and then the purse of sequins which you have in your bosom, and distribute them among the musicians and dancers as you go along. When you have reached the hall, do not fail to give some also to the female slaves, whom you will see about the bride, when they approach you. But remember, whenever you put your hand in your purse, draw it out full of sequins, and beware of sparing them. Do exactly as I have told you, with confidence, and be not surprised at anything ; fear no one, and trust for the consequences to the superior power of one who will dispose of everything as he thinks best for you."

The young Bedreddin, well instructed in what he was to do, advanced towards the door of the bath. The first thing he did was to light his torch by that of a slave ; then mixing with the rest, as if he had belonged to a grandee of Cairo, he walked with them, and accompanied the groom who came out of the bath, and mounted one of the horses from the sultan's stable.

Bedreddin, finding himself near the musicians and dancers, who preceded the hunchback, frequently drew from his purse handfuls of sequins, which he distributed amongst them. As he conferred these bounties with admirable grace, and the most obliging air, all those who received them cast their eyes on him ; and no sooner had they seen him than they were riveted on him, so great was his beauty and the symmetry of his person.

They at length arrived at the gates of Schemseddin Mohammed's palace, who little thought his nephew was so near him. Some of the officers, to prevent confusion, stopped all the slaves who carried torches, and would not suffer them to enter. They also wanted to exclude Bedreddin Hassan, but the musicians and dancers, for whom the doors were open, declared they would not proceed if he were not allowed to accompany them. "He is not one of the slaves," said they ; "you have only to look at him to be fully convinced of that. He must be some young stranger, who wishes from curiosity to see the ceremonies observed at weddings in this city." Saying this, they placed him in the midst of them, and made him go in, notwithstanding the officers. They took from him his torch ; and after having introduced him into the hall, they

placed him on the right hand of the groom, who was seated on a magnificent throne, next to the daughter of the vizier.

She was dressed in her richest ornaments, but her countenance displayed a languor, or rather a desponding sorrow, of which it was no difficult matter to divine the cause, on seeing by her side so deformed a husband, and one so little deserving her love: The throne of this ill-matched pair was erected in the middle of a large sofa; the wives of the emirs, viziers, and officers of the sultan's chamber, together with many other ladies of the court, as well as of the city, were seated a little below on each side, according to their rank; and all were so brilliantly and richly dressed, that the whole formed a beautiful spectacle. They each held a lighted flambeau.

When they saw Bedreddin Hassan enter, they all fixed their eyes on him, and could not cease looking at him, so much were they struck with the beauty of his figure and countenance. When he was seated, each lady quitted her place to have an opportunity of observing him closely, and not one returned to it again who did not feel a tender emotion arise in her bosom.

The difference which existed between the appearance of Bedreddin Hassan and the crooked groom, gave rise to no few murmurs among the assembly. "That handsome youth," exclaimed the ladies, "ought to possess our bride; and not this deformed wretch." They did not rest here, for they even ventured to utter imprecations against the sultan, who, abusing his absolute power, had united deformity to beauty. They also vented execrations on the groom, and put him quite out of countenance, much to the diversion of the spectators, who by their hootings for some time interrupted the symphony which was playing. At length the musicians again began their concert, and the women who had dressed the bride approached her.

Each time the bride changed her dress which it was her custom to do seven different times, she arose, and followed by her women, passed before the groom without deigning to look at him, and went to present herself to Bedreddin Hassan, to show herself to him in her new ornaments. Bedreddin then, according to the instructions he had received from the Genius, put his hand into the purse, and drew it out full of sequins, which he distributed to the women who attended the bride. He did not forget the musicians and dancers, and gave them some also. It was a pleasant sight to observe them all pushing and scrambling for the sequins; while they testified their gratitude, and told him by signs that they wished him to marry the bride instead of the hunchbacked groom. The women who were about her said the same thing, even in the hearing of the hunchback.

When the ceremony of changing the dresses was completed, the musicians ceased playing and retired, making signs to Bedreddin to remain. The ladies did the same thing, and took their leave together with all those who did not belong to the house. The bride went into a closet, where her women followed to undress her, and there remained no one in the hall except the hunchbacked groom, Bedreddin, and some servants. The hunchback, who was furiously enraged with Bedreddin, gave him a scowling look out of the corner of his eyes. "What art thou waiting for?" he called out, "Why dost thou not depart with the rest? Walk off." As Bedreddin had no pretext for remaining there, he retired rather embarrassed; but he was scarcely out of the vestibule when the Genius and the fairy presented themselves before him and stopped him. "Where art thou going?" said the Genius; "return, for the hunchback has left the hall; you have nothing to do but to make your way to the chamber of the bride. When you are alone with her, tell her confidently that you are her husband—that the sultan only intended to divert himself with the hunchback, and that to appease this pretended husband you have ordered him

a large dish of cream in his stable. With such a person as yours, you will not find much difficulty in persuading her, and she will be delighted with so agreeable an exchange. We are now going to take care that the hunchback shall not return to prevent you from passing the night with your bride, for she is yours, not his."

While the Genius was thus encouraging Bedreddin, and instructing him in what he was to do, the hunchback had quitted the hall. The Genius went to the place he had retired to, and assuming the figure of a large black cat, began to mew in a terrific manner; the hunchback clapped his hands and made a noise to frighten it away; but the cat, instead of retreating, made a high back, and fixed its eyes, almost darting fire, fiercely on him, mewing still louder than before. It then increased in size so much that it shortly appeared larger than an ass. The hunchback at this sight was going to call for assistance, but he was so terrified that he could not utter a sound, and remained with his mouth open unable to speak. To increase his terror, the Genius suddenly changed into a large buffalo, and under this shape cried with a loud voice, "Base hunchback." At these words the frightened groom fell upon the floor, and covering his head with his robe to avoid seeing this horrible beast, he replied, trembling: "Sovereign prince of the buffaloes, what do you require of me?" "Ill befall thee!" replied the Genius, "hast thou the temerity to dare to marry my mistress?" "Ah, sir," cried the hunchback, "I implore you to pardon me; if I am criminal, it is through ignorance alone. I did not know that the lady had a buffalo for her lover; command me in whatever you please, I swear I am ready to obey." "By death!" resumed the Genius, "if thou quittest this spot, or breakest silence before the sun rises, nay, if thou utterest but a syllable, I will crush thy head to atoms. By that time I permit thee to leave this house, but I command thee to fly quickly, and not to look back; and if thou hast ever the audacity to return, it shall cost thee thy life." Thus saying, the Genius transformed himself into a man, and took the hunchback by the heels; then after holding him against the wall, his head downwards, he added, "If thou darest to stir before the sun arises, I will, as I have said, take thee by the feet and dash thy head into a thousand pieces against this wall."

To return to Bedreddin Hassan, who, encouraged by the Genius and the fairy, had re-entered the hall, and had gone privately into the nuptial chamber, where he seated himself; waiting with anxious expectation the success of his adventure, at the expiration of some time the bride arrived, conducted by an old woman, who stopped at the door to wish the bridegroom happiness, without looking whether it was the hunchback or another; she then shut it and retired.

The young bride was extremely surprised at seeing, instead of the hunchback, Bedreddin Hassan, who presented himself to her with the utmost grace imaginable. "Ha! my friend," exclaimed she, "how came you here at this hour? I suppose you are one of my husband's comrades." "No, madam," replied Bedreddin, "I am in a different situation from that disgusting hunchback." "But," replied she, "you do not seem to be aware that you are abusing my husband." "He your husband, madam?" returned Bedreddin, "can you remain so long in this opinion? Be undeceived: such beauty will not be sacrificed to the most despicable of men. I, madam, am the happy mortal for whom it is reserved. The sultan chose to amuse himself with imposing this little deceit on the vizier, your father, and has fixed on me for your true husband. You must have observed, that the ladies, the musicians, the dancers, your women, in short every one belonging to your house, were diverted with this comedy. We have dismissed the poor hunchback to his



stable, where he is now regaling himself with a dish of cream ; and you may rest assured that he will never more appear before your beautiful eyes."

At this discourse the daughter of the vizier, who had entered the nuptial chamber more dead than alive, changed countenance, and assumed an air of gaiety, which added so much to her beauty that Bedreddin was quite charmed with her. "I did not expect," said she, "so agreeable a surprise ; I considered myself as condemned to pass the rest of my days in misery ; but my happiness is so much greater as I am going to be united to a man so worthy of my affection." She then undressed herself and went to bed. Bedreddin Hassan, on his part, was delighted to find himself in possession of so many charms, and quickly undressed. He put his clothes on a chair, together with the purse which the Jew had given him, and which was still full, notwithstanding all he had taken from it.

When the lovers were asleep, the Genius, who had rejoined the fairy, told her it was now time to complete what they had so well begun, and so happily conducted thus far. "Let us not be surprised," said he, "by daylight, which will now soon appear ; go and take away the young man without waking him."

The fairy repaired to the chamber of the lovers, who were both in a profound sleep, and stole away Bedreddin Hassan, dressed as he was in his shirt and drawers ; then flying with wonderful swiftness to the gates of Damascus, in Syria, whither she was accompanied by the Genius, they arrived precisely at the time, when the minister, appointed for that purpose, was calling the people to prayers at break of day. The fairy gently placed Bedreddin on the ground near the gate, and then retired with the Genius.

The gates were opened, and the people who had assembled in great numbers to go out were extremely surprised at seeing Bedreddin Hassan extended on the ground in only his shirt and drawers. One said, "He has been obliged to decamp from his mistress in such haste he had not time to dress himself." "See," said another, "to what accidents one is exposed ; he has passed the night in drinking with his friends, and being inebriated, went out for some purpose, and instead of returning he has wandered here, not knowing what he did, and has been overtaken by sleep." Others formed different opinions, but no one could guess by what chance he got there. A slight breeze, which was beginning to rise, blew aside his shirt, and exposed a bosom whiter than snow. They were all so surprised with the whiteness of his skin, that they exclaimed with admiration so loud as to awaken the young man. His astonishment was not less than theirs on finding himself at the gate of a city, where he had never been, and surrounded by a crowd of people, who were examining him attentively. "Gentlemen," said he, "I entreat you to inform me where I am, and what you want of me." One of them replied, "Young man, the gates of this city are but just opened, and when we came out we found you lying here, just as you now are, and we stopped to look at you. Have you passed the night here—and do you know that you are at one of the gates of Damascus?" "At one of the gates of Damascus?" exclaimed Bedreddin, "You are joking with me ; when I went to bed last night I was at Cairo." At these words some of the people, moved with compassion, said it was a pity that so handsome a youth should have lost his senses, and then passed on.

"My son," said a good old man to him, "you must be mistaken, for how could you be last night at Cairo, and this morning at Damascus? That cannot be." "It is very true notwithstanding," replied Bedreddin, "and I protest to you, also, that I passed the whole of yesterday at Balsora." He had scarcely pronounced these words, when they all burst into a laugh, and cried, "He is mad, he is mad." Some, however, pitied him on account of his extreme youth, and a man who was present, said : "My son, you have lost your reason : you

know not what you say. How is it possible that a man should be in the day at Balsora, in the night at Cairo, and in the morning at Damascus? You surely cannot be awake: collect your thoughts a little." "What I tell you," rejoined Bedreddin, "is so true, that I was last night married in the city of Cairo." All those who had laughed before now redoubled their laughter at hearing this. "Take care," resumed the person who addressed him before, "you must have dreamed all this, and the illusion still remains impressed on your mind." "I know what I say," replied the youth; "tell me, then, how I should have dreamed I was at Cairo, where I am persuaded I was in reality, where my bride was conducted seven times before me, each time in a different dress, and where I saw a frightful hunchback, to whom they were going to marry her? Tell me, too, what is become of my robe, my turban, and the purse of sequins I had at Cairo?"

Although he assured them that all this was true, yet the people who listened to him only laughed at what he said, which so confused him that he did not know himself what to think of all that had happened. At length he arose and walked into the city, and the crowd followed him, crying out, "A madman! a madman!" On hearing this, some ran to the windows, others came out at their doors, and some joining those who had surrounded Bedreddin, cried out, also, in the same manner, "A madman!" without knowing why. Being much embarrassed by this occurrence, he came to the house of a pastrycook who was opening his shop, and entered it to escape from the hooting of the mob who followed him.

This pastrycook had formerly been the chief of a troop of wandering Arabs who attacked caravans, and although he was established at Damascus, where no one had any reason to complain of his conduct, yet was he feared by all who had any knowledge of him. The first look, therefore, which he cast on the populace, that followed Bedreddin, dispersed them. The pastrycook, seeing the coast clear, began to question the young man, inquiring who he was, and what had led him to Damascus. Bedreddin did not conceal either his birth or the death of the grand vizier, his father, and then proceeded to relate how he had left Balsora, and in what manner, after falling asleep on the tomb of his father, he had, on waking, found himself at Cairo, where he had married a lady. Lastly, he expressed his surprise at seeing himself in Damascus, without being able to comprehend any of these miracles.

"Your history is very astonishing," said the pastrycook, "but if you will follow my advice, you will not disclose to any one the circumstance you have related to me, and you will wait patiently until Heaven shall be pleased to put a period to the misfortunes with which it thinks proper to afflict you. You may remain with me till such a change takes place; and as I have no children, I will acknowledge you as my son if you consent. After I have adopted you, you may go freely about the city, and will no longer be exposed to the insults of the populace."

Although this adoption conferred no great honour on the son of a grand vizier, Bedreddin nevertheless accepted the proposal of the pastrycook, judging very properly that it was the only step he could take in his present situation. The pastrycook procured him a dress, and taking witnesses with him, went before a *cadi* to declare that he acknowledged him as his son; after which Bedreddin resided with him, taking only the simple name of Hassan, and learned the art of making pastry.

Whilst this was passing at Damascus the daughter of Schemseddin Mohammed awoke; and not finding Bedreddin by her side, concluded that he had risen softly not to interrupt her slumbers, and that he would soon come back again. She was waiting his return when the vizier Schemseddin Mohammed,

her father, much affected by the affront he conceived had been put upon him by the sultan of Egypt, came and knocked at the door of her apartment, that he might bewail with her the unhappy destiny she had been forced to submit to. He called her by her name, and she no sooner heard his voice than she got up to open the door to him. She kissed his hand, and received him with an air of so much satisfaction that the vizier, who expected to find her bathed in tears, and as much afflicted as he felt himself, was extremely surprised. "Unhappy girl!" cried he, in an angry tone, "is it thus you appear before me? After the horrid sacrifice you have just completed, can you present yourself to me with a countenance which bespeaks content?" When the bride perceived her father's displeasure at the joy which brightened her features, she replied, "My lord, I entreat you not to reproach me so unjustly. It is not that monster, the hunchback, who is more detestable in my eyes than death itself, to whom I have been married; all the company treated him with such derision and contempt that he was obliged to go away and hide himself, and make room for a charming young man who is my true husband." "What story are you relating?" interrupted the grand vizier; "did not the hunchback sleep with you last night?" "No, my lord," returned she, "I have slept only with the young man I was speaking of, who has large eyes, and fine black eyebrows." At these words, Schemseddin lost all patience, and put himself in a violent rage with his daughter. "Ah, foolish girl," said he, "will you make me lose my senses by relating such falsehoods?" "It is you, father," replied she, "who almost drive me out of my senses by your incredulity." "Is it not true, then," continued the vizier, "that the hunchback—" "Ah, let us talk no more of the hunchback," interrupted she, "evil attend the hunchback! Must I for ever hear nothing but the hunchback's name repeated in my ears? I again tell you," added she, "that he has not passed the night in my chamber; but my dear husband whom I have mentioned to you was the person; and indeed he cannot be now at any great distance from hence."

Schemseddin Mohammed went out immediately to look for him; but instead of finding him, he was in the greatest astonishment at seeing the hunchback fellow standing on his head with his feet in the air, and in the very situation in which the Genius had left him. "What is the meaning of all this?" he asked him; "who placed you in that situation?" The hunchback, who instantly recognised the vizier, answered directly, "Ah, ha, you wish to give me in marriage to the mistress of a buffalo, do you? to one who is in love with a villanous Genius? but I won't be your dupe, I promise you; so do not think of tricking me in that manner."

Schemseddin Mohammed thought the hunchback was out of his senses when he heard him talk in this manner. "Get away from hence," he cried, "and stand upon your legs." "I will take good care how I do that," answered he, "unless indeed the sun be risen. You must know that as I was coming here yesterday evening, a large black cat suddenly appeared to me; and it kept increasing in size, till it was as large as a buffalo. I shall never forget what it said to me; mind therefore your own concerns, and leave me here." Instead, however, of going, the vizier took hold of the hunchback by the legs, and obliged him to get up. He was no sooner on his legs than he ran away as fast as ever he could, without stopping once to look behind him. He went directly to the palace, and presented himself before the sultan of Egypt, who was highly diverted at the account he gave of the manner in which the Genius had treated him.

Schemseddin Mohammed then went back to his daughter's apartment still more astonished than before, and quite uncertain how to think or act. "Well, dishonoured girl," he said to his daughter, "can you give me no farther account of this adventure, which both confuses and distracts me?" "Sir," she replied,

"I cannot tell you anything more than I have already had the honour of informing you of. But look here," she added, "here is some part of my husband's dress, which he has left on this chair, and perhaps this may throw some light upon what you wish to discover." In saying this she presented the turban of Bedreddin to the vizier, who took and examined it in every part. "I should conjecture this to be a turban that belonged to a vizier, if it were not made in the fashion of those of Moussoul." As he was thus feeling it, he thought he perceived something sewn up in the inside of it between the folds. He asked, therefore, for some scissors, and having unripped it, he discovered a paper folded up. This was in fact the packet which Noureddin Ali had given to his son Bedreddin, on his death bed, and who had concealed it in this place as the best method of preserving it. Schemseddin Mohammed having opened the packet, instantly knew the handwriting of his brother Noureddin Ali, and read the following direction, "For my son, Bedreddin Hassan." Before he had time to reflect on these circumstances, his daughter put the purse into her father's hands, which she had found in Bedreddin's pocket. He immediately opened it, and saw it filled with sequins, as I have before mentioned; for through the care of the Genius and fairy, it constantly remained full, in spite of all the sums that Bedreddin had bestowed on those around him. Upon a sort of ticket attached to the purse, he read these words:—"A thousand sequins belonging to the Jew Isaac." And under them the following, which the Jew had written before he had left Bedreddin:—"Delivered to Bedreddin Hassan, in payment for the cargo, which he has sold me, of the first vessel that arrives in port belonging to him, and which did belong to Noureddin Ali, his father, of happy memory." He had scarcely finished reading these words, when he uttered a loud cry, and fainted away.

When the vizier Schemseddin Mohammed was recovered from his fainting by the assistance of his daughter, and the women she had called,—“My daughter,” said he, “be not surprised at the accident which has just happened to me; the cause of it is such that you will hardly give credit to it. The husband, who has passed the night with you, is no other than your cousin, the son of Noureddin Ali. The thousand sequins that are in this purse, remind me of the quarrel I had with my dear brother. This, without doubt, is the wedding present he makes you. God be praised for all these things, and particularly for this wonderful adventure, which so manifestly proves his power.” He then looked at the writing of his brother, and kissed it several times, bathing it with his tears. “Why cannot I,” said he, “see Noureddin himself here, and be reconciled to him, as well as I see his hand, which causes me so much joy?”

He read the packet through, and found the dates of his brother's arrival at Balsora, of his marriage, and of the birth of Bedreddin Hassan; then comparing these dates with those of his own marriage, and of his daughter's birth at Cairo, he could not help wondering at the coincidence; and reflecting that his nephew was his son-in-law, he gave himself up entirely to the emotions of pleasure, which all these circumstances gave rise to. He took the packet, and the ticket off the purse, and showed them to the sultan, who readily forgave what had passed.

Nevertheless Schemseddin Mohammed could not comprehend why his nephew had disappeared; he hoped, however, every moment, that he would arrive, and expected him with the greatest impatience, that he might embrace him. Having waited seven days without seeing him, he ordered him to be sought for in every part of Cairo, but he could hear no tidings of him, which caused him great uneasiness. “This is indeed,” said he, “a singular adventure; surely such never befel mortal before.”

Uncertain what might happen in the course of time, he thought proper to write himself the account of what had taken place; the manner in which the nuptials were celebrated, and how the hall and the chamber of his daughter were furnished. He also made a parcel of the turban, the purse, and the rest of the dress of Bedreddin, and locked it up.

At the expiration of a few days, the daughter of Schemseddin Mohammed perceived herself to be pregnant, and in nine months she was delivered of a son. A nurse was provided for the child, with other women and slaves to attend upon him, and his grandfather named him Agib.

When the young Agib had attained the age of seven years, the vizier Schemseddin Mohammed, instead of having him taught to read at home, sent him to school to a master, who had a great reputation for his learning, and two slaves had the care of conducting and bringing him back every day. Agib used to play with his comrades, and as they were all of much inferior condition to himself, they behaved towards him with great deference; and in this the master of the school set the example, by excusing many faults in Agib, which he did not pass over in the other scholars. The blind submission with which Agib was treated, completely spoilt him; he became proud and insolent; he expected his companions to bear everything from him, but would not in return comply with any of their wishes. He domineered everywhere; and if any one dared to oppose his desires, he vented his anger in abusive language, and often even in blows. At last he made himself so insupportable to all the scholars, that they complained of him to the master of the school. At first he exhorted them to have patience, but when he perceived that by so doing he only increased the insolence of Agib, and being tired himself of the trouble he gave him, he said to them, "My boys, I see that Agib is an impertinent fellow; I will tell you how to mortify him; and in a way that will prevent his tormenting you any longer; indeed, that may perhaps prevent his returning any more to school. To-morrow when he comes, and you are going to play together, place yourselves round him, and let one of you say aloud, 'We are going to play, but on condition that they who play shall tell their name, and that of their father and mother. Those who refuse to do so we shall consider as bastards, and will not admit them to our games.'"

The following day when they were assembled, they did not fail to do as their master had instructed them. They surrounded Agib, and one of them said, "Let us play at some game, but on condition that he who cannot tell his name, and that of his father and mother, shall not play with us." They all agreed, Agib as well as the rest, to these conditions. Then the boy who had spoken first, interrogated them all, and each answered satisfactorily till he came to Agib, who replied, "I am called Agib, my mother is named the Queen of Beauty, and my father is Schemseddin Mohammed, the vizier of the sultan."

At these words all the children cried, "Agib, what are you saying? that is not the name of your father, but of your grandfather." "Heaven confound you!" replied he angrily; "what! do you dare say that the vizier Schemseddin Mohammed is not my father?" The scholars then all laughed at him, saying, "No, no; he is only your grandfather, and you shall not play with us; we will take care not to come near you." Then they left him, and continued to laugh amongst themselves. Agib was mortified at their joking him, and began to cry.

The master, who had been listening, and heard all that passed, now made his appearance, and addressing Agib, "Do not you yet know, Agib," said he, "that the vizier Schemseddin Mohammed is not your father? He is your grandfather, and the father of your mother, the Queen of Beauty. We, as well as yourself, are ignorant of the name of your father; we only know that the

sultan wished to marry your mother to one of his grooms, who was deformed, but that a Genius slept with her. This is unpleasant for you, but it ought to teach you to treat your companions with less haughtiness than you have hitherto done."

The little Agib, vexed at the jokes of his schoolfellows, immediately left the school, and returned home in tears. He went first to the apartment of his mother, who, alarmed at seeing him in so much affliction, anxiously inquired the cause. He could only answer by broken words, interrupted with sobs, so great was his grief; and it was not till after several attempts that he could explain the mortifying subject of his sorrow. When he had finished, "In the name of God, mother," added he, "do tell me who is my father." "My son," replied she, "your father is the vizier Schemseddin Mohammed, who embraces you every day." "You do not tell me the truth," resumed he, "he is not my father, but yours. But whose son am I?" At this question, the Queen of Beauty, recalling to her mind the night of her marriage, which had been followed by so long a widowhood, began to weep with the utmost regret for the loss of a husband so amiable as Bedreddin.

At the moment, while the Queen of Beauty, as well as her son Agib, was weeping, the vizier Schemseddin Mohammed entered, and desired to know the cause of their affliction. His daughter informed him by relating the mortification her son had met with at school. This account very much affected the vizier, who joined his tears with theirs; and who supposing from this that the world entertained opinions not very favourable to his daughter's virtue, felt extremely mortified. Being very much disturbed by this cruel reflection, he went to the palace of the sultan, and after having prostrated himself at his feet, he humbly entreated him to grant him permission to take a journey into the provinces of the Levant, and more particularly to Balsora, to seek his nephew Bedreddin Hassan; for he could not bear that the whole city should suppose that a Genius had slept with his daughter. The sultan felt for the grief of the vizier, approved his intention, and gave him leave to execute it; he even wrote a letter of recommendation, in the most obliging manner, to the princes and nobles, in whose dominions Bedreddin might be, to give their consent that he should accompany the grand vizier.

Schemseddin Mohammed could not find words to express his gratitude to the sultan for all his goodness towards him. He could only prostrate himself a second time before this prince; but the tears which flowed from his eyes, sufficiently proved his feelings. At length he took his leave of the sultan, after wishing him every kind of prosperity. When he returned home, he immediately began to prepare for his departure, which was done with so much diligence, that at the end of four days he set off, accompanied by his daughter and by Agib, his grandson.

They took the road to Damascus, and travelled nineteen days without stopping; but on the twentieth, being arrived in a beautiful meadow, at a little distance from the gates of that city, they alighted, and had their tents pitched on the banks of a river, which runs through the city, and renders the surrounding country very agreeable.

The vizier Schemseddin Mohammed resolved to remain two days in this beautiful spot, and to continue his journey on the third. He, however, allowed the persons in his suite to visit Damascus. They almost all availed themselves of this permission, some from curiosity to see a city they had heard so favourably spoken of; others to dispose of the Egyptian merchandise which they had brought with them, or to buy the silks and rarities it produced.

The Queen of Beauty, wishing that her son Agib should also have the gratification of walking about this celebrated city, ordered the black eunuch,

who filled the office of governor to the child, to take him there, and be very careful that he did not meet with any accident.

Agib, being magnificently dressed, set out with the eunuch, who carried a large cane in his hand. They had no sooner entered the city, than Agib, who was as beautiful as the morning, attracted the admiration of every one. Some ran out from their doors to see him nearer; others came to the windows; and those who were walking in the streets, not satisfied with stopping to look at him, accompanied him, in order to have the pleasure of contemplating his beauty for a longer time. In short, every one admired him, and poured benedictions on his father and mother, for having brought into the world so sweet a boy. The eunuch and he came by chance to the shop where Bedreddin Hassan was, and being surrounded by so great a crowd of people, they were obliged to stop at his door.

The pastrycook who had adopted Bedreddin as his son, had been dead some years, and left him, as his heir, his shop, and all his property. Bedreddin, therefore, was now master of the shop, and exercised the trade of pastrycook so successfully, that he had acquired a great reputation in Damascus. Observing so many people assembled round his door to look at Agib and the black eunuch, he also began to examine them attentively.

Having cast his eyes on Agib, he felt himself agitated, yet without knowing why. He was not struck like the mob, with the extreme beauty of this boy; his emotion arose from another cause, which he could not comprehend. It was the force of blood, which agitated this tender father, who, leaving his occupations, approached Agib, and said to him with an engaging air, "My little gentleman, you have won my heart; and I beg you will do me the favour to walk into my shop and eat some of my pastry; that I may, during that time, have the pleasure of admiring you at my leisure. He pronounced these words with so much tenderness, that the tears came into his eyes. The little Agib was affected by it, and turning towards the eunuch, said, "This good man has a countenance that pleases me; and he speaks to me in so affectionate a manner, that I cannot avoid doing what he requests; let us go in and eat some of his pastry. "Oh no, indeed," replied the eunuch, "it would be a pretty tale to tell, that the son of a vizier, as you are, went into a pastrycook's shop to eat; do not think that I shall suffer it." "Alas, my young gentleman," cried Bedreddin then, "they are very cruel to trust you with a man who treats you so harshly;" then addressing the eunuch, "My good friend," said he, "do not prevent this young gentleman from doing me the favour I ask; do not mortify me so. Rather do me the honour of coming in with him, and by so doing, you will evince, that although you are without as brown as the chestnut, yet that you are equally white within. Do you know," continued he, "that I have a secret, which will change your colour from black to white?" The eunuch began to laugh on hearing this, and asked Bedreddin what the secret was. "I will tell you," replied he, and immediately he recited some verses in praise of black eunuchs, saying that it was owing to them that the honour of sultans, of princes, and of all great men was in safety. The eunuch was delighted with these verses, and no longer resisting the entreaties of Bedreddin, he suffered Agib to go into his shop, whither he also accompanied him.

Bedreddin Hassan was extremely pleased at having obtained his request; and returning to his work which he had left, "I was making," said he, "some cheesecakes; you must, if you please, eat some, for I am persuaded you will find them excellent; my mother, who makes them admirably, taught me how to make them also, and they come from all quarters of the town to buy them of me." Saying this, he drew a cheesecake out of the oven, and having

strewed on it some grains of pomegranate and sugar, he served it to Agib, who found it delicious. The eunuch, to whom Bedreddin presented one likewise, was of the same opinion.

Whilst they were both eating, Bedreddin examined Agib with the greatest attention; and reflecting that he perhaps had such a son by the charming wife from whom he had been so soon and so cruelly separated, he could not suppress some tears. He was preparing to question the little Agib on the reason of his journey to Damascus, but had not time to satisfy his curiosity; for the eunuch, who wished to hasten his return to the tents of his grandfather, took him away as soon as he had done eating. Bedreddin Hassan was not satisfied with following him with his eyes only, but immediately shutting up his shop, he set off after them, and overtook them by the time they had reached the gate of the city.

The eunuch, perceiving that he followed them, was very much surprised, and said to him angrily, "How importunate you are, what do you want?" "My good friend," replied Bedreddin, "do not be displeased; I have a little business just out of the city, which I have thought of, and I must go and give orders concerning it." This answer did not satisfy the eunuch, who, turning to Agib, said, "see what you have brought on me; I foresaw that I should repent of my compliance; you would go into this man's shop, but indeed I was a fool to suffer it." "Perhaps," said Agib, "he may really have business out of the city, and the road is free for every one." They then continued walking without looking behind them till they were arrived at the tents of the grand vizier; they then looked back, and saw that Bedreddin followed close. Agib perceiving that he was within a few paces of him, blushed and turned pale successively, according to the different emotions which arose. He feared that the vizier his grandfather would learn that he had been in a pastrycook's shop to eat. With this apprehension he took up a large stone that lay at his feet, threw it at Bedreddin, and striking him in the middle of his forehead, covered him with blood. He then ran away as fast as he could into the tent with the eunuch, who told Bedreddin that he must not complain of a misfortune which he deserved, and had brought upon himself.

Bedreddin returned to the city, stopping the blood from his wound with his apron, which he had not taken off. "I was wrong," said he to himself, "to leave my house, and occasion so much pain to this child; for he only treated me thus, because he no doubt supposed that I had some bad design against him." Being returned home, he had his wound dressed; and consoled himself with reflecting, that there were many people in this world more unfortunate than himself.

Bedreddin continued to exercise the business of pastrycook at Damascus, and his uncle Schemseddin Mohammed left it three days after his arrival. He took the road to Emmaus, from thence to Hamath, and thence to Aleppo, where he rested two days. From Aleppo he crossed the Euphrates, entered Mesopotamia, and after having traversed Mardin, Moussoul, Sengira, Diarbekir, and several other towns, he arrived at last at Balsora, where he directly requested an audience of the sultan, who was no sooner informed of the rank of Schemseddin Mohammed, than he granted it. He received him very favourably, and asked him the cause of his journey to Balsora. "Sire," replied the vizier Schemseddin Mohammed, "I am come to learn tidings of the son of Noureddin Ali, my brother, who had the honour of serving your majesty." "It is a long time since Noureddin Ali died," answered the sultan; "as for his son, all that I can inform you of is, that about two months after the death of his father, he suddenly disappeared; and no one has seen him since, notwithstanding the pains I have been at to discover him. But his mother, who was the daughter

of one of my viziers, is still living." Schemseddin Mohammed requested permission to see her, and to conduct her into Egypt, to which the sultan having consented, he would not defer till the morrow so great a gratification; he inquired for the abode of this lady, and went to her immediately, accompanied by his daughter and her son.

The widow of Nouredin Ali lived in the same house which had been occupied by her husband during his life. It was a handsome mansion, built in a superb style, and ornamented with columns of marble; but Schemseddin did not stop to admire it. On entering it he kissed the door, and a marble, on which was written in letters of gold, the name of his brother. He desired to speak to his sister-in-law, whose servants informed him, that she was in a small edifice, built in the shape of a dome, which they showed him in the middle of a spacious court. This tender mother was accustomed to pass the greatest part of the day and night in this building, which she had erected to represent the tomb of Bedreddin Hassan, whom she supposed to be dead; having so long in vain expected his return. She was then occupied in weeping for the loss of this dear son, and Schemseddin Mohammed found her buried in the deepest affliction.

He paid his compliments to her on entering, and having entreated her to suspend her tears and lamentations, he acquainted her that he had the honour of being her brother-in-law; and also told her the reason which had caused him to leave Cairo, and travel to Balsora. After having informed his sister-in-law of everything that had happened at Cairo, on the night of his daughter's nuptials, and the surprise which the discovery of the packet that was found sewn up in Bedreddin's turban had occasioned, he presented Agib and the Queen of Beauty to her.

When the widow of Nouredin Ali, who had hitherto remained seated, like one who took no interest in the affairs of this world, understood by the conversation of Schemseddin Mohammed, that the dear son, she so much regretted, might still be alive, she got up and closely embraced the Queen of Beauty and the little Agib, in whom she recognised the features of Bedreddin. The tears that now fell from her eyes, were different from those she had been long in the habit of shedding. She could not kiss the youth enough, who, on his part, received her embraces with every demonstration of joy he was capable of. "It is time, madam," said Schemseddin Mohammed, "to put an end to your sorrows, and to dry your tears; for you must now arrange your affairs, and go with us into Egypt. The sultan of Balsora has given me permission to take you with me; and I trust you will not refuse your consent. I hope we shall yet have the good fortune to meet with my nephew, your son."

The widow of Nouredin Ali listened to this proposal with great pleasure, and instantly began to make preparations for departure. During this, Schemseddin Mohammed requested another audience, and having taken leave of the sultan, who sent him back laden with honours, and with a considerable present for the sultan of Egypt, he left Balsora, and again took the road to Damascus.

As soon as they had arrived in the vicinity of that city, Schemseddin ordered them to pitch their tents just without the gate by which they were to enter; and told his people he should remain there three days for the purpose of resting; and also to purchase whatever was most curious and worthy of being presented to the sultan of Egypt. While he himself was occupied in making choice of the most beautiful stuffs which the principal merchants had brought to him, Agib entreated the black eunuch, his governor, to go and walk in the city with him; telling him that he was desirous of seeing whatever he had not time to see when he was there before; and that he was also very anxious to get some intelligence of the pastrycook at whom he had thrown the stone and

wounded. The eunuch agreed to it, and walked into the city with him; having first obtained leave of his mother, the Queen of Beauty.

They entered Damascus by the gate which led to the palace, and which was the one that was nearest to the tents of the vizier Schemseddin Mohammed. They walked through the great squares, saw the public buildings, and the covered market, or place where the richest merchandise was sold. They then came to the ancient mosque of the Omniades about the time they were assembling for prayers, between noon and sunset. They then passed by the shop of Bedreddin Hassan, whom they found still engaged in making cheesecakes. "Your servant," said Agib to him; "look at me: don't you remember to have seen me before?" At these words Bedreddin cast his eyes upon him, and instantly recognised him. At the very same moment—O surprising effect of paternal love—he felt the same emotion he had done the first time. He was much troubled; and instead of answering him, he remained some time without the power of speaking a single word. Having at length recollected himself, he said, "Do me the favour, my young lord, once more to come into my shop with your governor, and taste a cheesecake. I beg you will pardon me for the displeasure I caused you by following you out of the city: I was hardly myself, and knew not what I did. It was a sort of charm which drew me after you, and which I could neither resist nor account for."

Agib, surprised at this speech of Bedreddin, replied, "The friendship you profess towards me is carried to an excess, and I will not come into your house unless you promise faithfully not to follow me when I go away. If you pledge your word and keep it, I will come again to-morrow, while the vizier my grandfather is engaged in making purchases for a present to the sultan of Egypt." "My little master," answered Bedreddin Hassan, "I will do anything you desire me." Agib and the eunuch then entered into his shop.

Bedreddin immediately presented them with some cheesecakes, which were as delicate and good as those they had tasted the first time. "Come," said Agib, "sit down next me, and eat with us." Bedreddin being seated, was going to embrace Agib, to express to him the joy he experienced at being near him; but Agib pushed him back, saying, "Be quiet, your friendship is too tender. Be content with looking at and conversing with me." Bedreddin obeyed, and began to sing a song, which he composed at the moment, in praise of Agib. He did not eat, and was only attentive to serve his guests. When they had done eating, he gave them water to wash in, and a very white and delicate napkin to wipe their hands. He then took a vase of sherbet, and prepared a large china bowl full, in which he put some snow; and presenting the bowl to the little Agib, "Take it," said he, "it is some rose sherbet, the most delicious that this city can produce; you never tasted any so good." Agib drank some with great pleasure; Bedreddin then took the bowl and presented it to the eunuch, who drank it up to the last drop.

When Agib and his governor were satisfied, they thanked the pastrycook for the good cheer they had received, and returned as quick as they could, it being rather late. They arrived at the tents of Schemseddin Mohammed, and went first to that which the ladies occupied. The grandmother of Agib was rejoiced to see him again, and as she had always her son Bedreddin in her mind, she could not refrain from tears on embracing Agib. "Ah! my child," cried she, "my happiness would be complete, if I could have the pleasure of embracing your father Bedreddin Hassan as I do you." She was just going to supper; she made him sit next her, and asked him many questions about his walk; then, saying, that he must have a good appetite, she helped him to a piece of cheesecake, that she had made herself, and which was excellent; for as we have already said, she could make them better than any pastrycook. She gave some

to the eunuch also, but they had both eaten so much with Bedreddin, that they could with difficulty taste it.

Agib had scarcely touched a bit of the cheesecake he had been helped to, when pretending that it did not suit his palate, he left it on his plate; and Schaban,—for this was the name of the eunuch,—did the same. The widow of Nouredin Ali, vexed at seeing her grandson so indifferent about her cheesecake, said, "What, my son! do you scorn the work of my hands in this way? Let me tell you, that no one in the world can make such good cheesecakes, excepting your father Bedreddin Hassan, to whom I myself taught the curious art of making them." "Ah, my good grandmother," cried Agib, "allow me to say, that if you cannot make them better than this, there is a pastrycook in this city who surpasses you in this great art: we have just been eating one in his shop, which is a great deal better than this of yours."

At these words the grandmother, casting an angry look at the eunuch—"What, Schaban," said she, "is my grandson intrusted to your care in order that you should take him to eat at a pastrycook's like a beggar's child!" "Madam," replied the eunuch, "it is true that we have been talking to a pastrycook, but we did not eat with him." "Pardonnez-moi," interrupted Agib, "we went into his shop and ate a cheesecake." The lady, still more irritated against the eunuch, left the table abruptly, and ran to the tent of Schemseddin Mohammed, whom she acquainted with this misdemeanour of the eunuch, in terms more fitted to exasperate the vizier against the delinquent, than to incline him to forgive the fault.

Schemseddin Mohammed, who was naturally of a warm temper, did not omit so favourable an opportunity of putting himself in a passion. He immediately repaired to the tent of his sister-in-law, and said to the eunuch: "Wretch, hast thou the temerity to abuse the confidence I have placed in thee?" Schaban, although sufficiently convicted by the testimony of Agib, thought proper still to deny the fact. But the child maintained the contrary: "Grandfather," said he to Schemseddin Mohammed, "I assure you that we have eaten so much that we are not in want of any supper. The pastrycook also regaled us with a large bowl of sherbet." "Well, wicked slave," cried the vizier, turning to the eunuch, "after this wilt thou still deny that you both went into a pastry-shop and ate there?" Schaban had the effrontery to swear that it was not true. "Thou art a liar," said the vizier; "I believe my grandson rather than thee. Nevertheless, if thou canst eat the whole of the cheesecake which was on this table, I shall be persuaded that thou speakest truth."

Schaban, although full to the very throat, submitted to this trial, and took a bit of the cheesecake, but he was obliged to take it out of his mouth again, for his stomach turned against it. He however continued in his falsehood, and said that he had eaten so much the preceding day that his appetite was not yet returned. The vizier, irritated by the repeated falsities of the eunuch, and fully convinced that he was guilty, had him laid on the ground, and ordered him to receive the *bastinado*. The unhappy wretch uttered loud cries on suffering this punishment, and confessed the fact. "It is true," cried he, "that we did eat a cheesecake at a pastry-shop, and it was a hundred times better than that which is on this table."

The widow of Nouredin Ali thought that it was through spite to her that Schaban praised the pastrycook's cheesecake, therefore, addressing herself to him, "I cannot believe," said she, "that the cheesecakes of this pastrycook are more excellent than mine. I will be satisfied on this point; thou knowest where he lives; go to him, and bring me back a cheesecake directly." She then ordered some money to be given to the eunuch to buy the cheesecake, and he set off. Being come to the shop of Bedreddin, "Here, my good

pastrycook," said he, "here is some money for you; give me one of your cheesecakes; one of our ladies wishes to taste them." There happened to be some hot, just out of the oven; Bedreddin chose the best, and giving it to the eunuch, said, "Take this, I warrant it to be excellent; and I can assure you that no one in the world can make such, excepting my mother, who perhaps is still living."

Schaban returned quickly to the tent with his cheesecake. He presented it to the widow of Nouredin Ali, who was impatiently expecting it. She broke off a piece to taste it, but it had scarcely touched her lips, when she uttered a loud cry, and fainted away. Schemseddin Mohammed, who was present, was very much surprised at this accident: he himself threw some water on his sister-in-law's face, and did all in his power to relieve her. As soon as she was recovered from her fainting, "Oh God!" she cried, "it must have been my son—my dear son Bedreddin, who made this cake."

When the vizier Schemseddin Mohammed heard his sister-in-law say that it was Bedreddin Hassan who had made the cheesecake brought by the eunuch, he felt inexpressible joy; but then reflecting that this joy was without foundation, he said, "But, madam, what makes you think this? Cannot there be a pastrycook in the world who is able to make cheesecakes as well as your son?" "I allow," replied she, "that there may be pastrycooks capable of making them as good; but as I make them in a very particular manner, and as no one except my son possesses the secret, it must absolutely have been he who made this. Let us rejoice, my dear brother," added she with transport, "we have at length found what we have been so long and so anxiously seeking." "Madam," replied the vizier, "I entreat you to moderate your impatience; we shall soon know what to think of this circumstance. We have only to desire the pastrycook to come here; if he be Bedreddin Hassan, you as well as my daughter will recollect him. But you must conceal yourselves, and see him without his seeing you: for I do not wish the discovery to take place at Damascus. I intend to postpone it till we return to Cairo; where I propose giving you a very agreeable entertainment."

Saying this, he left the ladies in their tent, and retired to his own. He there made fifty of his people come before him, and said to them, "Take each of you a stick and follow Schaban, who will conduct you to a pastrycook in the city. When you arrive, break everything you find in his shop: if he inquires why you commit such an outrage, only ask if it was not he who made the cheesecake that was bought of him; if he replies in the affirmative, seize his person, bind him well, and bring him to me, but take care that you do not strike or hurt him. Go, and lose no time."

The vizier was quickly obeyed; his people, armed with sticks, and conducted by the black eunuch, repaired to the house of Bedreddin Hassan, where they broke in pieces the plates, the boilers, the saucepans, the tables, and all the other furniture and utensils they could meet with, and deluged his shop with sherbet, cream, and confectionery. At this sight, Bedreddin Hassan being much astonished, said to them in a pitiful tone, "Good people, why treat me thus? What is the matter? What have I done?" "Was it you," replied they, "who made the cheesecake which you sold to the eunuch who is with us?" "Yes," returned he, "I made it myself; what fault have you to find with it? I defy any one to make a better!" Instead of returning any answer, they continued to break everything, and the oven itself was not spared.

The neighbours, being by this time attracted by the noise, and much surprised to see fifty armed men committing such depredations, inquired the cause of this violent usage. Bedreddin once more said to those who were engaged in it, "I entreat you to inform me what crime I have committed, that you should thus break and destroy everything in my house?" "Is it not you," replied they,

"who made the cheesecake that you sold to this eunuch?" "Yes, yes, I am the person," cried he; "and I will maintain that it is excellent, and that I do not deserve this unjust treatment." They seized his person without listening to him, and having torn off the linen of his turban, they made use of it to tie his hands behind him; then dragging him by force out of his shop, they led him along.

The populace which had assembled, touched with compassion for Bedreddin, took his part, and was inclined to oppose the designs of the people of Schemseddin Mohammed, but at this moment some officers of the governor of the city arrived, and dispersing the mob, favoured the carrying off of Bedreddin; for Schemseddin Mohammed had been to the governor of Damascus to acquaint him with the order he had given, and to request his assistance and guard; and this governor, who commanded over Syria in the name of the sultan of Egypt, dared not refuse anything to the vizier of his master. Bedreddin, therefore, was dragged on, notwithstanding his lamentations and tears.

He asked the people, who surrounded him as he went along, what had been discovered in his cheesecake; but they did not return any answer. At length he arrived at the tents, where he was made to wait till Schemseddin Mohammed returned from the governor of Damascus.

The vizier being arrived inquired about the pastrycook. When he was brought before him, "My lord," said Bedreddin, with tears in his eyes, "do me the favour to tell me in what I have offended you?" "Ah, wretch," exclaimed the vizier, "was it not thou who madest the cheesecake thou sentest me?" "I confess that it was," replied Bedreddin; "but what crime have I committed by doing so?" "I will punish thee as thou deservest," resumed Schemseddin Mohammed, "and it will cost thee thy life for having made so bad a cake." "Ah, good God," cried Bedreddin, "what do I hear! is it a crime worthy of death to have made a bad cheesecake?" "Yes," replied the vizier; "and thou must not expect from me any other treatment."

While they were thus engaged together, the ladies, who were concealed, observed Bedreddin attentively, and had not much difficulty in recollecting him, although so long a time had elapsed since they had seen him. The joy they experienced was such that they both fainted away. When they had recovered, they wanted to go and embrace Bedreddin; but the promise they had made the vizier not to show themselves, prevailed over the most tender emotions of nature and love.

As Schemseddin Mohammed had resolved to set off that same night, he ordered the tents to be struck, and the carriages to be prepared for the commencement of the journey. As for Bedreddin, he gave instructions that he might be put in a case well fastened, and carried on a camel. As soon as everything was in readiness for their departure, the vizier and the people in his suite began their march. They travelled the whole of that night and the following day without resting; at the approach of night they stopped. They then took Bedreddin out of his cage to make him take some nourishment, but they were careful to keep him at a distance from his mother and his wife; and during the twenty days they were on their journey, they treated him in the same manner.

When they arrived at Cairo, they encamped without the city walls, by order of the vizier Schemseddin Mohammed, who desired Bedreddin to be brought to him. When he was come, he said to a carpenter whom he had sent for on purpose, "Go and get some wood, and cut out a large stake immediately." "Ah! my lord," cried Bedreddin, "what are you going to do with this stake?" "To fasten you to it," replied the vizier, "and then have you dragged through all the quarters of the city, that every one may behold in thee a vile pastrycook, who makes cheesecakes without putting pepper in them." At these words, Bedreddin Hassan exclaimed in so comical a manner,

that Schemseddin Mohammed had enough to do to keep his countenance: "Great God! is it then for not having put pepper in a cheesecake that I am condemned to suffer a death as cruel as ignominious?"

"What!" said Bedreddin, "was everything in my house to be broken and destroyed, myself imprisoned in a box, and at last a stake prepared for my execution; was all this done, only because I did not put pepper in a cheesecake? Great God, who ever heard of such a thing? Are these actions worthy of Mussulmen, of persons who profess to practise justice, probity, and all kinds of good works?" Saying this, he burst into tears, then beginning again his lamentations, "No," continued he, "no one was ever treated so unjustly and so rigorously. Is it possible that they should deprive a man of life, for not having put pepper in a cheesecake? Cursed be all cheesecakes, as well as the hour in which I was born! would to God I had died at that instant!"

The unhappy Bedreddin did not cease his complaints, and when the stake was brought, and the nails to fasten him to it, he uttered dreadful cries at so horrid a spectacle: "Oh God!" said he, "canst thou permit me to suffer a death so infamous and excruciating? And for what crime too? It is not for having stolen, nor for having committed murder, neither for having denied my religion; it is for not having put pepper in a cheesecake!"

As the night was now far advanced, the vizier Schemseddin Mohammed ordered Bedreddin to be put again into his case, and said to him, "Remain there till to-morrow; the day shall not pass before I order thee to be put to death." The case was taken away, and placed on the camel, that had brought it from Damascus; all the other camels were reladen, and the vizier mounting his horse, ordered that the camel, which carried his nephew, should go before him, and entered the city followed by all his equipage. After passing through several streets, where no one appeared, as the inhabitants had retired to rest, he arrived at his house, where the case was conveyed, with strict charge not to open it till he should think proper.

Whilst they were unlading the other camels, he took aside the mother of Bedreddin Hassan and his daughter, and addressing the latter, "God be praised," said he, "my dear daughter, that we have so happily met with your cousin and husband. I dare say you recollect the state in which your chamber was on the night of your nuptials. Go, and have everything placed as it was then. If by chance you do not remember it, I can supply the defect in your memory by the description I wrote at the time. On my part, I will go and give orders for the rest."

The Queen of Beauty went with joy to execute the commands of her father, who began to place all the things in the hall in the same way as they were when Bedreddin Hassan was there with the hunchback groom of the sultan of Egypt. As he read the writing, his servants put each piece of furniture in its place. The throne was not forgotten, nor the lighted flambeaux. When everything was prepared in the hall, the vizier entered the chamber of his daughter, where he placed the dress of Bedreddin, together with the purse of sequins. This being done, he said to the Queen of Beauty, "Undress yourself, my daughter, and go to bed; and when Bedreddin comes into this chamber, begin to complain of his having been out too long a time, and tell him, that you were much surprised when you awoke, not to find him by your side. Press him to return to bed, and to-morrow morning you will entertain your mother-in-law and me with the account of what passed in the night." At these words, he went out of his daughter's chamber, and left her to retire to bed.

Schemseddin commanded all the servants to go out of the hall, excepting only two or three whom he wished to remain, and gave directions for them to take Bedreddin out of the case, to put him on a shirt and drawers, and, in

that state to bring him into the hall, where they were to leave him alone, and shut the door. Bedreddin Hassan, although in so unhappy a condition, had fallen so sound asleep, that the servants of the vizier took him out of the case, and put on his shirt and drawers, without waking him; and then carried him so quickly into the hall, that they did not give him time to recollect himself. When he found himself alone in the hall, he looked around him, and the things he saw, reminding him of his marriage, he perceived with astonishment, on a closer inspection, that this was the same hall in which he had seen the hunchback groom. His surprise increased, when drawing near to the door of a chamber, which he found open, he saw his clothes in the same spot where he remembered to have placed them on the night of his nuptials. "Great God!" said he, rubbing his eyes, "am I asleep or awake?"

The Queen of Beauty, who watched him, after entertaining herself with his astonishment, undrew the curtains of the bed, and advancing her head, said in a tender voice, "My lord, what are you doing at the door? Come and lie down again. You have been out of the room a long time: I was much surprised, when I awoke, not to find you by my side." Bedreddin's countenance changed, when he perceived, that the lady who spoke to him was the same charming person with whom he remembered to have slept. He went into the chamber, but instead of going to bed, as his mind was full of the thoughts of what had passed during the last ten years, and he could not persuade himself that so many events had taken place in only one night; he approached the chair, where his clothes and purse of sequins were, and having examined them with great attention, "By the great living God!" cried he, "these are things which I cannot comprehend." The lady, who was diverted with his embarrassment, said to him, "Once more, my dear lord, let me beg you to come to bed; what engages your attention?" At these words he advanced towards the Queen of Beauty: "I entreat you, madam," said he, "to acquaint me if it is long since I was with you." "The question surprises me," replied she; "did you not just now rise from my side? Your mind must be strangely absent." "Madam," resumed Bedreddin, "my spirits certainly are not very composed. I remember to have been with you, it is true; but I also remember to have lived ten years at Damascus. If I have really slept with you this night, I cannot have been absent so long." "Yes, my lord," replied the Queen of Beauty, "you have, no doubt, dreamt that you were at Damascus." "Nothing can be so ridiculous," cried Bedreddin, bursting into a laugh; "I assure you, madam, that this dream will appear to you very laughable. Imagine, if you please, that I found myself at the gates of Damascus in my shirt and drawers, just as I am at this moment; that I entered the city amidst the shouts and hisses of the populace, who followed to insult me; that I took refuge with a pastrycook, who adopted me, taught me his business, and left me all his property when he died; that after his death I kept his shop. In short, madam, an infinity of adventures befel me, which would be too tedious to relate; all I can say is, that I did well to awake, otherwise I should have been nailed to a stake." "And why, pray," said the Queen of Beauty, pretending surprise, "were you to suffer so cruelly? You must have committed some heinous crime." "No, indeed," replied Bedreddin, "it was for the most comical and ridiculous thing you can conceive. My only crime was the having sold a cheesecake in which I had not put any pepper." "I must confess," said the lady, laughing heartily, "that you were treated very unjustly." "Oh, madam," resumed he, "this was not all; on account of this cursed cheesecake, in which I was accused of not having put any pepper, they had broken and destroyed everything in my shop; they had bound me with cords, and shut me up in a case, where I was so closely confined, that I feel still as if I were in it. At last, they had sent for a carpenter, and

ordered him to prepare a stake to fasten me to. But God be praised, that all this was only the effect of sleep."

Bedreddin did not pass the night very quietly ; he awoke from time to time, and asked himself whether he was dreaming or awake. He doubted his good fortune, and wishing to ascertain the truth, he undrew the curtains and cast his eyes over the room. "I am not deceived," said he ; "this is the same chamber into which I came, instead of the hunchback, and slept with the beautiful lady, who was destined for him." Daylight, which now began to appear, had not removed his uneasiness when the vizier Schemseddin Mohammed, his uncle, knocked at the door, and entered at the same moment to wish him good day. Bedreddin Hassan was extremely surprised to see a man he was so well acquainted with appear immediately after ; but he no longer bore the appearance of the terrible judge who had pronounced the decree of his death. "Ah !" cried he, "it is you who have treated me so cruelly, and condemned me to a death, the thoughts of which still fill me with horror, for having made a cheese-cake without putting pepper in it." The vizier began to laugh ; and, to dispel his fears, related how, by the interference of a Genius (for the account he had received from the hunchback made him suspect the truth), he had been conveyed to his house, and had married his daughter instead of the groom belonging to the sultan. He then acquainted him that it was by means of the packet, written by Noureddin Ali, that he had discovered him to be his nephew ; and at last told him, that it was in consequence of this discovery, that he left Cairo, and had gone to Balsora in search of him. "My dear nephew," added he, embracing him with the greatest tenderness, "I beg your pardon for all I have made you suffer since I have discovered you. I wished to reconduct you here before I acquainted you with your good fortune, which you must find so much the more pleasant as it has cost you more pain. Console yourself for all your afflictions with the joy you must experience at being again with persons who are the most dear to you. Whilst you dress yourself, I will go and acquaint the lady, your mother, who is all impatience to embrace you ; and I will bring you your son, whom you saw at Damascus, and towards whom you felt so much affection without knowing him.

No words are sufficiently expressive to give any idea of the joy of Bedreddin, when he saw his mother and his son Agib. They ceased not embracing each other and evincing all the transports which nature and the tenderest affection can inspire. The mother said the most affecting things to Bedreddin : she related to him the sorrow which so long an absence had created, and the tears she had shed on his account. The little Agib, instead of avoiding the embraces of his father, as he had done at Damascus, flew to receive them ; and Bedreddin Hassan, divided between two objects so worthy of his love, thought he could not lavish on them sufficient proofs of his affection.

Whilst these things were passing in the house of Schemseddin Mohammed, the vizier himself was gone to the palace, to give the sultan an account of the happy success of his journey. As soon as he returned home, as he had prepared a superb entertainment, he sat down to table with all his family, and his whole household passed the day in great festivity and rejoicings.

The vizier Giafar having concluded the history of Bedreddin Hassan, said to the caliph Haroun Alraschid, "Commander of the Faithful, this is what I had to relate to your majesty." The caliph thought this history so surprising that he did not hesitate to grant his pardon to the slave Rihan ; and to console the young man for having so unhappily deprived himself of a wife he tenderly loved, this prince married him to one of his own slaves, loaded him with gifts, and continued to bestow favours upon him as long as he lived.

"But, sire," added Scheherazadè, "however entertaining the history I have related may have been, I know another, which is far more so: if your majesty wishes to hear it to-morrow night, I am sure you will think so too." Schiararose without making any reply, and very uncertain what he should do. "The good sultana," thought he to himself, "relates very long stories, and when she has once begun one, there is no possibility of refusing to hear the whole of it. I do not know whether I ought not to order her death to-day; yet no; I will not do anything precipitately; the story she promises me is perhaps the most diverting of any I have yet heard, and I must not deprive myself of the pleasure of hearing it; I can give orders for her execution after she has finished it."

Dinarzadè did not fail the following morning to awake the sultana of the Indies before daybreak, according to her usual custom. And Scheherazadè, having requested permission of Schiararose to begin the history she had promised him, proceeded as follows:—

THE HISTORY OF THE LITTLE HUNCHBACK.

In the city of Casgar, which is situated near the farther extremity of Great Tartary, there formerly lived a tailor, who had the good fortune to possess a very beautiful wife, with whom he lived on terms of the greatest affection. One day, while he was at work in his shop, a little hunchbacked fellow came and sat down at the door, and began playing on a tîmbrel, which he accompanied with his voice. The tailor was much pleased with his performance, and resolved to carry him home, that he might entertain his wife with his pleasant and humorous songs. He made the proposal to the little hunchback, who readily accepted the invitation; and the tailor directly shut up his shop, and took him home with him.

They were no sooner arrived, than the tailor's wife, who had already set out the table, as it was near supper-time, placed upon it a very nice dish of fish, which she had been dressing. They all three then sat down; but in eating, the little hunchback had the misfortune to swallow a large fish-bone, which stuck fast in his throat, and almost instantly choked him, before the tailor or his wife could apply any relief. They were both most dreadfully frightened at this accident; for as it happened in their house, they had great reason to fear it might come to the knowledge of some of the officers of justice, who would punish them as murderers; the husband, however, thought of an expedient to get rid of the dead body.

He recollected that there lived in his neighbourhood a physician, who was a Jew, and he formed a plan which he directly began to put in execution. He and his wife took up the body, one by the head and the other by the feet, and carried it to the physician's house. They knocked at the door, which was at the bottom of a steep and narrow flight of stairs that led to his apartment. A maid-servant immediately came down without even staying for a light, and opening the door, asked them what they wanted. "I will thank you to go and tell your master," said the tailor, "that we have brought him a patient, who is very ill, and for whom we request his advice. Stop," added he, holding out a piece of money in his hand, "give him this in advance, that he may be assured we do not intend he should lose his labour for nothing." While the servant went back to inform her master, the Jewish-physician, of this good news, the tailor and his wife quickly carried the body of the little hunchback up stairs, left him close to the door, and returned home as fast as possible.

In the mean time, the servant went and told the physician, that a man and a woman were waiting for him at the door, and requested him to go down to see

a sick person whom they had brought for that purpose. She then gave him the money she had received from the tailor. Transported with joy at the idea of being paid beforehand, he conceived it must be a most excellent patient that they had brought him, and one who ought not to be neglected. "Bring a light directly," cried he to the girl, "and follow me." Having said this, he ran towards the staircase in such a hurry, that he did not wait for the light; and encountering little hunchback, he gave him such a blow with his foot, as sent him from the top of the stairs to the bottom; and he had some difficulty to prevent himself from following him. "Why don't you come with the light?" he called out to the servant. She at last appeared, and they went down stairs. When the physician found that what had rolled down stairs turned out to be a dead man, he was so alarmed at the sight, that he invoked Moses, Aaron, Joshua, Esdras, and all the other prophets of the law, to his assistance. "Wretch that I am!" exclaimed he, "why did I not wait for the light!" why did I go down in the dark? I have completely killed the sick man whom they brought to me. I am the cause of his death, and if the good ass of Esdras does not come to my assistance, I am a lost man."

Notwithstanding the perplexity he was in, he had the precaution to shut his door, for fear that as any one passed along the street they might perchance discover the unfortunate accident, of which he believed himself to be the cause. He took up the body, and carried it into his wife's apartment, who was near fainting when she saw him come in with his fatal load. "Alas!" she cried, we are lost if we cannot find some means of getting rid of this dead man before to-morrow morning. We shall inevitably forfeit our lives, if we keep him till day breaks. What a misfortune! how could you kill this man?" "Never mind, in this dilemma, how it happened," said the Jew, "our only business at present is how to remedy so dreadful a calamity."

The physician and his wife then consulted together upon the best means of ridding themselves of the body during the night. The husband pondered a long time, but could think of no stratagem likely to extricate them from this embarrassment; but his wife was more fertile in invention, and said, "A thought occurs to me. Let us take the carcass up to the terrace of our house, and let him down the chimney into that of our neighbour's, the Mussulman."

This Mussulman was one of the sultan's purveyors, and it was his office to furnish oil, butter, and all other articles of a similar kind. His warehouse for these things was in his dwelling-house, where the rats and mice used to make great havoc and destruction.

The Jewish physician having approved of his wife's plan, they took the little hunchback and carried him to the roof of the house, and having first fastened a cord under his arms, they let him gently down the chimney into the purveyor's apartment. They managed this so adroitly, that he remained standing on his feet against the wall, exactly as if he were alive. As soon as they found they had landed him, they drew up the cords, and left him precisely in the situation I have related. They had hardly gone down from the terrace, and retired to their chamber, when the purveyor went into his. He was just returned from a wedding-feast, which he had been invited to partake of on that evening, and he had a lantern in his hand. He was very much surprised at seeing, by means of this light, a man standing up in the chimney; but as he was naturally of a brave and courageous disposition, and as he thought it was a thief, he seized hold of a large stick, with which he directly ran at little hunchback. "Ah, ah," he cried, "I thought it was the rats and mice, who eat my butter and tallow; and it is you who come down the chimney, and rob me. I don't think you will ever wish to visit me again." In saying this he attacked hunchback, and gave him many hard blows. The body at last fell down, with its face on the ground.

The purveyor then redoubled his blows; but at length remarking that the body he struck, did not make the least motion, he stopped to observe it. Perceiving then that it was a dead man, fear succeeded to rage. "What have I done, miserable wretch that I am!" he exclaimed. "Alas, I have carried my vengeance too far. Good God, have pity upon me, or my life is gone. I wish all the butter and oil were destroyed a thousand times over before they had caused me to commit so criminal an action." He remained pale and confounded, and imagined he already saw the officers of justice coming to conduct him to his punishment.

While the sultan of Casgar's purveyor was beating the little hunchback, he did not perceive his hump; the instant he did, he poured out an hundred imprecations on it. "Oh, you rascal of a hunchback, you dog of deformity! would to God you had robbed me of all my fat and grease before I had found you here. I should not then have got into the scrape I have, and be hanged to you, and your rascally hump. O ye stars, which shine in the heavens," he cried, "shed your light to lead me out of the imminent danger in which I am." Having said this, he took the body of the hunchback upon his shoulders, went out of his chamber, and walked into the street, where he set it upright against a shop, and having done this, he made the best of his way to his house without once looking behind him.

A little while before daybreak, a Christian merchant, who was very rich, and who furnished the palace of the sultan with most things which were wanted there, having passed the night in revelry, was just come from home in his way to a bath. Although he was much intoxicated, he had still sufficient recollection to know that the night was far advanced, and that the people would very soon be called to early prayers. It was for this reason that he was making all the haste he could in order to arrive at the bath, for fear any Mussulman, as he was going to mosque should meet him, and order him to prison as a drunkard. When he was at the end of the street, however, he stopped, for some occasion or other, close to the shop against which the sultan's purveyor had placed little hunchback's body, which at the very first touch fell directly against the merchant's back. The latter took him for a robber that was attacking him, and therefore knocked him down with his fist, with which he struck him on the head. He immediately repeated the blows, and began calling out, "Thief, thief!"

The guard belonging to that quarter of the city came directly on hearing his cries, and seeing that it was a Christian who was beating a Mussulman (for little hunchback was of our religion), "What business have you," he said, "to ill-treat a Mussulman in that manner?" "He wanted to rob me," answered the merchant; "and he attacked me behind in order to seize me by the throat." "You have revenged yourself pretty well," replied the guard, taking hold of the merchant's arm and pulling him away, "let him go, therefore." At the same time he held out his hand to the hunchback to assist him in getting up; but observing that he was dead, "Oh, oh!" he cried, "is it thus then that a Christian has the impudence to assassinate a Mussulman?" Having said this he arrested the Christian merchant, and carried him before the magistrate of the police, from whence they sent him to prison till the judge had risen, and was ready to examine the accused. In the mean time the merchant became completely sober; and the more he reflected upon this adventure, the less could he comprehend how a single blow with the fist was capable of taking away the life of a man.

Upon the report of the guard, and after having seen the body, which they had brought with them, the judge examined the Christian merchant, who could not deny the crime, although he in fact was not guilty of it. As the little hunchback belonged to the sultan, for he was one of his buffoons, the judge

determined not to put the Christian to death till he had learnt the will of the prince. He went therefore to the palace, in order to give an account of what had passed to the sultan; who, having heard the whole story, replied, "I have no mercy to show towards a Christian who kills a Mussulman; go and do your duty." At these words the judge of the police went back, and ordered a gibbet to be erected; and then sent some criers through the city to make known that a Christian was going to be hanged for having killed a Mussulman.

At last they took the merchant out of prison, and conducted him on foot to the gallows. The executioner having fastened the cord round the merchant's neck, was just going to draw him up, when the sultan's purveyor, making his way through the crowd, approached the executioner, and called out, "Stop, stop, do not be in a hurry; it is not he who has committed the murder; I have done it." The judge of the police who attended the execution, immediately interrogated the purveyor, who gave him a long and minute detail of the manner in which he had killed the little hunchback; and he concluded by saying that he had carried the body to the place where the Christian merchant had found it. "You are going," added he, "to sacrifice an innocent person, since he could not kill a man that was not alive. It is enough for me to have slain a Mussulman without having to charge my conscience with the murder of a Christian, who is not criminal."

When the purveyor of the sultan of Casgar had thus publicly accused himself of being the author of the hunchback's death, the judge could not do otherwise than act with justice towards the merchant. "Let the Christian merchant go," said he to the executioner, "and hang this man in his place, since it is evident by his own confession, that he is the guilty person. The executioner immediately released the merchant, and put the rope round the neck of the purveyor; and at the very instant that he was going to complete the punishment, he heard the voice of the Jewish physician, who desired them to stop the execution that instant, that he might come and take his place at the foot of the gallows.

"Sir," said he, as soon as he was come before the judge, "this Mussulman, whom you are about to deprive of his life, does not deserve to die; I alone am the guilty wretch. About the middle of last night, a man and a woman, who are total strangers to me, came and knocked at my door with a sick person, whom they brought with them; my servant went instantly to the door without waiting for a light, and having first received a piece of money from one of them, she came to me and said, that they wished I would come down and look at the sick person. While she was bringing me this message, they brought the patient up to the top of the stairs, and then disappeared. I went directly out without waiting till my servant had lighted a candle, and meeting with the sick man in the dark, I gave him an unintentional kick, and he fell from the top to the bottom of the staircase. * I then discovered that he was dead, and that he was a Mussulman, and the very same little hunchback whose murderer you now wish to punish. My wife and myself took the body and carried it to the roof of our house, whence we let it down into that of our neighbour, the purveyor, whose life you are now most unjustly going to take away; as we were the persons who placed the body in his apartment by lowering it down the chimney. When the purveyor discovered him, he took him for a thief, and treated him as such. He knocked him down, and believed he had killed him; but this is not the fact, as you may now be convinced by my confession. I alone am the author of the murder, and although it was unintentional, I am resolved to expiate my crime, and not charge my conscience with the death of two Mussulmen, by suffering you to take away the life of the sultan's purveyor, whose innocence I thus clearly prove to you."

As soon as the judge was convinced that the Jewish physician was the true murderer, he ordered the executioner to take him and set the purveyor at liberty. The cord was round the neck of the physician, and he had hardly a moment to live, when the voice of the tailor was heard, who entreated the executioner not to proceed, while he made his way to the judge of the police, to whom on his approach he said, "You have been very near, sir, causing the death of three innocent persons; but if you will have the patience to listen to me, you shall be informed of the true murderer of the hunchback. If his death ought to be expiated by that of another person, mine is the one to be taken.

"As I was at work in my shop yesterday evening, a little before dark, and in a disposition well suited to enjoy any amusement, this little hunchback came up to it half drunk, and sat down. He immediately began to sing, and went on for some time, when I proposed to him to come and pass the evening at my house. Having conducted him thither, we sat down to table almost directly, and I helped him to a little piece of fish, in eating which a bone stuck fast in his throat, and in spite of everything my wife and I could do to relieve him, he was choked in a very short time. We were much afflicted at his death, and for fear of being taken up on account of it, we carried the body to the door of the Jewish physician. I knocked, and told the servant who opened it to go back to her master as soon as possible and request him from us to come down see a patient whom we had brought to him; and that he might not refuse coming, I charged her to put into his own hand a piece of money which I gave her for that purpose. She was no sooner gone up than I carried the little hunchback to the top of the stairs, and laid him on the first step; having done this, my wife and myself made the best of our way home. When the physician came out in order to go down, he stumbled against the hunchback and rolled him down from the top to the bottom, which made him suppose he was the cause of his death. Since, however," added he, "the case is as it is, let the physician go, and take my life instead of his."

The judge of the police and all the spectators were filled with astonishment at the various strange events that the death of the little hunchback seemed to have given rise to. "Let the physician then depart," said the judge, "and hang the tailor, since he confesses the crime." When the executioner had set the physician at liberty, he put the cord round the tailor's neck.

While all this was passing and the executioner was preparing to hang the tailor, the sultan of Casgar, who never passed any length of time without seeing the little hunchback, his buffoon, ordered him into his presence, when one of the attendants replied, "Little hunchback, sire, whom your majesty is so desirous to see, after having got drunk yesterday, escaped from the palace, contrary to his usual custom, in order to wander about the city, and this morning he was found dead. They have brought a man before the judge of the police who was accused of his murder, and the judge immediately ordered a gibbet to be erected. At the very moment they were going to hang the accused person, another man came up to the gallows, and then a third, who each accused themselves, and declared the former to be innocent of the murder. All this took up some time, and the judge is at this moment in the very act of examining this third man, who says that he is the real murderer."

On hearing this the sultan of Casgar sent one of his attendants to the place of execution. "Go," he cried, "with all possible speed, and tell the judge instantly to bring all the accused persons before me, and order them also to bring the body of poor little hunchback, whom I wish once more to see." The officer instantly went, and arrived at the very moment the

executioner began to draw the cord in order to hang the tailor. He called out to them as loud as he could to suspend the execution. As the hangman knew the officer, he durst not proceed, but let the tailor live. The officer having now come up to the judge, declared the will of the sultan. The judge obeyed, and proceeded to the palace with the tailor, the Jew, the purveyor, and the Christian merchant, and ordered four of his people to carry the body of the hunchback.

As soon as they were come into the presence of the sultan, the judge prostrated himself at his feet, and when he got up he gave a faithful and accurate detail of everything that related to the adventure of the little hunchback. The sultan thought it so very singular that he commanded his own historian to write it down with all its particulars; then addressing himself to those who were present, he said, "Have any one of you ever heard a more wonderful adventure than this which is now happened to the hunchback, my buffoon?" The Christian merchant having first prostrated himself so low at the sultan's feet that his head touched the ground, then spoke as follows: "Powerful monarch, I think I am acquainted with a still more surprising history than that which you have just heard recited, and if your majesty will grant me permission I will relate it. The circumstances are of such a nature that no person can hear them without being affected at the narrative." The sultan having permitted him to speak, he began his story in these words.

THE STORY TOLD BY THE CHRISTIAN MERCHANT.

BEFORE I begin, sire, the account to which your majesty has consented to listen, I must if you please remark that I have not the honour of being born in any spot within the limits of your empire. I am a stranger, a native of Cairo in Egypt, of Coptic parents, and by religion a Christian. My father was by profession a broker, and had amassed a considerable fortune, which when he died he left to me. I followed his example, and pursued the same line of business. One day when I was in the public grain market at Cairo, which is frequented by the dealers in all sorts of grain, a young merchant, very well made, handsomely dressed, and mounted upon an ass, accosted me. He saluted me, and opening a handkerchief in which he had a sample of sesame, he showed it to me, and inquired how much a large measure of a similar quality was worth. I examined the sample which the young merchant had put into my hands, and told him that according to the present price a large measure was worth a hundred drachms of silver. "Look then," he said, "for a merchant who will buy it at that price, and come to the gate called Victory, where you will see a khan separate from every other house, and I will wait for you there." Having said this he went away and left me the sample of sesame, which I showed to different merchants on the spot, who all said they would take as much as I would sell them at one hundred and ten drachms of silver a measure, and at this rate I should gain ten drachms for each measure sold.

Pleased with so much profit, I went directly to the Victory gate, where the merchant was waiting for me. He carried me into his warehouse, which was full of sesame. I had it measured, and there were about one hundred and fifty large measures. I then loaded it upon asses, and went and sold it for five thousand drachms of silver. "Of this sum," said the young man to me, "you have a right, according to our agreement, to five hundred drachms, after the rate of ten drachms a measure; what remains belongs to me, but as I have no immediate want of it, go in and put it by for me till I shall come and demand it of you." I told him it should be ready at any time that he should

wish to come for it or send any one to demand it. I kissed his hand when he left me, and went home very well satisfied with his generosity.

A whole month passed without my seeing him; at the end of which time he appeared. "Where," he asked me, "are the four thousand five hundred drachms of silver which you owe me?" "They are all ready," I replied, "and I will immediately count them out to you." As he was mounted upon an ass, I requested him to alight and do me the honour to eat with me before he received his money. "No," he answered, "I have not time at present; I have some urgent business which requires my presence, and cannot stay, but in coming back I will call for my money; be so good as to have it ready for me." Having said this he went away. I waited for him a long time, but it was to no purpose, for he did not return till a month after. "This young merchant," thought I to myself, "places a great deal of confidence in me to leave the sum of four thousand five hundred drachms of silver in my hands without knowing anything of me. No one besides himself would surely act thus, for fear I should run away with the money." At the end of the third month I saw him come back mounted upon the same ass, but much more magnificently dressed than he was before.

As soon as I perceived the young man I went out to meet him. I entreated him to alight, and asked whether he wished me to count out the money which I had of his. "Never mind that," he replied in a lively and contented manner; I am in no hurry. I know it is in good hands, and I will come and take it when I shall have spent all I now have and nothing more remains. Adieu," added he, "and expect me again at the end of the week." At these words he gave his ass a cut with his whip, and was out of sight in a moment. "Vastly well," said I to myself; "he has told me to expect him in a week, and yet if I may judge from the tenour of his conversation I may not see him this age. Why should not I in the meantime make some use of his money? It will be of considerable advantage to me."

I was not mistaken in my conjecture, for a whole year passed before I heard anything of the young man. At the end of this time he again appeared, and as richly dressed as he had been the last time he came, but there seemed to me to be something or other which affected his spirits. I entreated him so far to honour me as to come into my house. "I agree to it for this once," he replied, "but it is only on condition that you put yourself to no additional trouble or expense on my account." "I will do exactly as you please," I said, "if you will favour me by coming in." He immediately alighted and entered my house. I then gave orders for the refreshments I wished to be procured, and while they were getting ready we entered into conversation, and when the repast was served we sat down to table. The very first morsel he took I observed it was with his left hand, and I continued all the time to be much astonished at never seeing him make use of his right. I knew not what to think of it. "From the very first moment," I said to myself, "I have known this merchant, I have always seen him behave with the greatest politeness, and it is impossible that he can act thus out of contempt for me. What can be the reason of his making no use of his right hand?" This matter continued to puzzle me extremely.

When the repast was over, and my servants had cleared everything away and left the room, we went and sat down on a sofa. I then offered as a sort of relish a very excellent kind of lozenge. Still he took it with his left hand. "I entreat you, sir," at last I cried, "to pardon me the liberty I take in asking you how it happens that you always make use of your left hand and never of the right; some accident surely has happened to it." At this he gave a deep sigh, and instead of answering me he drew out his right arm from his robe,

under which he had till now quite concealed it, when I saw to my utter astonishment that his hand was cut off. "You were much shocked without doubt," he said, "at seeing me eat with my left hand, but you now see I could not do otherwise." "May I inquire," I answered "how you had the misfortune to lose your right hand?" At this request he began to shed tears; after some time however he told me his history, which I am now going to repeat.

"I must in the first place inform you (said the young man), that I am a native of Bagdad. My father was extremely rich, and one of the most eminent men, both as to rank and quality, in that city. I had hardly begun to enter into the society of the world, when I was struck with the accounts which many people who had travelled in that country gave of the wonderful and extraordinary things in Egypt, and particularly at Grand Cairo. Their conversation made a deep impression on my mind; and I became excessively anxious to make a journey there. But my father, who was still alive, would not grant me permission. He at length died, and as his death left me master of my own actions, I resolved to go to Cairo. I directly employed a large sum of money in the purchase of different sorts of the fine stuffs and manufactures of Bagdad and Moussoul, and began my travels.

"When I arrived at Cairo, I stopped at a khan, which they call the khan of Mesroul. I took up my abode there, and also hired a warehouse, in which I placed the bales of merchandise that I had brought with me on camels. When I had arranged this business, I retired to my apartment, in order to rest myself, and recover from the fatigue of my journey. In the mean time my servants, to whom I had given some money for that purpose, went and bought some provisions and began to dress them. After I had satisfied my hunger I went to see the castle, mosques, the public places, and everything else that was worthy of notice.

"The next morning, I dressed myself very neatly, and after taking from my bales a few very beautiful and rich stuffs, for the purpose of carrying them to a bezestein (a sort of covered market-place for merchants, where the most valuable stuffs, jewels, &c. are sold), to know what they would offer me for them, I gave them to some of my slaves, and we went to the bezestein of the Circassians. I was instantly surrounded by a multitude of brokers and criers, who were soon informed of my arrival. I gave a specimen of my different stuffs to several criers, who went and showed them all over the bezestein: but I was offered by no merchant not even so much as the original cost of the merchandise, and the expenses of the carriage. This vexed me very much, and the criers were witness to my resentment and vexation. 'If you will depend upon us,' they said, 'we will show you a way to lose nothing by your stuffs.' I asked them what mode I ought to follow, in order to sell my goods to advantage. 'Distribute them,' said they, 'among different merchants, who will sell them in small quantities, and you may come twice every week, namely, on Mondays and Thursdays, and receive the money for which they have been sold. By this method you will make some profit, instead of losing anything, and the merchants also will have an advantage in the business. In the mean time you will have opportunity and leisure to walk about and view the town, and to go upon the Nile.'

"I followed their advice, and carried them with me to my warehouse, from which I took out all my goods; and returning to the bezestein, I distributed them among the several merchants whom they pointed out to me as the most trusty and creditable. The merchants gave me a receipt in due form, properly signed and witnessed, with the condition that I should make no demand for the first month.

"Having thus arranged all my business, I gave myself up entirely to pleasure and gaiety. I contracted a friendship with several young men about my own age, who contributed very much to make my time pass agreeably. When the first month had elapsed, I began to call upon my merchants regularly twice every week, accompanied by a proper public officer, to examine their books, and a money-changer to ascertain the goodness and different value of the various sorts of money they paid me. In this manner, I constantly brought away on those days a considerable sum of money, which I took with me to the khan of Mesrou, where I lodged. This, however, did not prevent me from going on the intermediate days of the week, to pass the morning sometimes with one merchant, and sometimes with another; and I was thus much pleased with their conversation, and with seeing what passed in the bezestein.

"One Monday, while I was sitting in one of these merchants' shops, whose name was Bedreddin, a lady of distinction, as I easily conjectured, both by her air and dress, and also by a female slave neatly attired, who followed her, entered the same shop and sat down close to me. Her external appearance, joined to a certain natural grace in everything she did, prejudiced me very much in her favour, and excited a great desire in me to know more of her than I did. I know not whether she perceived that I took a pleasure in beholding her, or whether my attention pleased her or not; but she lifted up the thick crape that hung over the muslin which concealed the lower part of her face, and thus gave me an opportunity of seeing her black eyes, that quite charmed me. She completed her conquest, and made me deeply in love with her by the pleasant tone of her voice, and by her obliging and modest manner when she addressed herself to the merchant, and inquired after his health since she had seen him last.

"After she had conversed some time upon indifferent subjects, she told him that she was in search of a particular sort of stuff, with a gold ground: and that she came to his shop because it contained the best assortment of goods of any in the bezestein; and that if he had such a thing, he would much oblige her by showing it to her. Bedreddin opened a good many different pieces, and having fixed upon one, she stopped and asked the price of it. He said he could afford to sell it her for eleven hundred drachms of silver. 'I will agree to give you that sum,' she replied, 'though I have not the money about me; but I hope you will give me credit for it till to-morrow, and suffer me to carry the stuff home, and I will not fail to send you eleven hundred drachms for which we have agreed, in the course of to-morrow.' 'Madam,' answered the merchant, 'I would give you credit with the greatest pleasure, and you should have full permission to take the stuff home with you, if it belonged to me; but it is the property of this young man, whom you see there, and this is one of the days fixed upon to give an account of the money for which his goods are sold.' 'How comes it,' cried the lady, 'that you treat me in this manner? Am I not in the habit of coming to your shop? And every time I have bought any stuffs, you have desired me to carry them home, without first paying for them; and have I ever failed sending you the money on the following day?' The merchant agreed to it. 'It is all very true, madam,' he answered, 'but to-day I have occasion for the money.' 'Well then,' she cried, throwing it down, 'take your stuff, and may God confound you, and all of your fellow-merchants, for you are all alike, and have no regard for any one but yourselves.' Having said this, she rose up in a passion, and went away extremely piqued against Bedreddin.

"When I saw that the lady was gone, I began to feel very much interested about her, and before she was too far off, I called her back, and said, 'Do me, madam, the favour to return, and perhaps I shall find a way to accommodate and satisfy both yourself and the merchant.' She came back, but made me

understand it was entirely on my account. 'Sir,' said I, at this moment, to the merchant, 'how much do you say it is, that you wish to receive for this stuff, which belongs to me?' 'Eleven hundred drachms of silver,' he replied, 'nor can I possibly let it go for less.' 'Give it then,' said I, 'to the lady, and permit her to carry it home. I will give you one hundred drachms for your profit, and give you an order to take this sum out of the account of the other merchandise, which you have of mine. I immediately wrote the order, signed it, and put it into the hands of Bedreddin. Then presenting the stuff to the lady, I said, you have now, madam, full power to take it away with you, and with respect to the money, you may send it to-morrow, or the next day, or if you will do me the honour to accept of the stuff, it is quite at your service.' 'This,' replied the lady, 'is very far from my intention. You have behaved with so much politeness, and in so obliging a manner, that I should be unworthy of appearing in the society of men, if I did not prove my gratitude to you. May God increase your fortune; suffer you to live a long time after I am gone; open the gates of heaven at your death; and may all the city publish the report of your generosity!'

"This speech gave me courage, and I said to her, 'Suffer me then, madam, only to see your face, as a return for the favour you say I have done you. This will repay me even with usury.' At these words she turned herself towards me, and lifting up the muslin which covered her face, she displayed a countenance most wonderfully beautiful. I was so much struck with it, that I could think of nothing to express what I felt at the sight. I was unable to take my eyes off, but she quickly covered her face again, for fear any one should perceive her, and after drawing down her long crape veil, she took up the piece of stuff, and went out from the shop, leaving me in a very different state from what I was in before her arrival. My mind continued greatly troubled, and strongly disordered for some length of time. Before I left the merchant, I asked him if he knew who the lady was; and he told me she was the daughter of an emir, who left her at his death an immense fortune.

"I had no sooner returned to the khan of Mesrou, than my people brought up supper; but I was unable to eat the least morsel. Nor could I close my eyes during the whole night, which appeared to me of more than ordinary length. As soon as it was day I got up, with the hopes of again beholding the object who thus disturbed my repose: and with the wish, should I be so fortunate, of pleasing her, I dressed myself still better than I had done the day before. I then returned to the shop of Bedreddin.

"I had not been there a great length of time, before I saw the lady approach, followed by her slave. She was much more magnificently dressed than on the preceding day. Paying no attention to the merchant, she addressed herself only to me. 'You see, sir,' she said, 'that I have kept my word with you very exactly. I promised yesterday to do so, and have now come on purpose to bring you the amount of what you had the goodness to trust me, without knowing anything of me. This is an act of generosity I shall never forget.' 'There was not the least necessity, madam,' I replied, 'for you at all to hurry yourself. I was perfectly easy with respect to my money, and am sorry for the trouble you have given yourself.' 'It would not, however, have been just in me to have abused your good nature,' she replied. In saying this, she put the money into my hands, and sat down near me.

"Taking the advantage which this opportunity of conversing with her gave me, I declared the love I felt for her; but she got up and left me so hastily, that I believed she was offended at the confession I made. I followed her with my eyes, as long as I could see her; and when she was quite out of sight, I took my leave of the merchant, and left the bezestein without knowing where

I went. I was meditating upon this adventure, when I felt some person pull me behind; I instantly turned round to see who it was, and recognised the young slave belonging to the lady, by whom my whole mind was absorbed. This sight delighted me. 'My mistress,' said she, 'who is the young lady that spoke to you in the shop of the merchant, wishes to speak a few words to you, if you will have the goodness to follow me.' I instantly went with her, and in truth found her mistress waiting for me in the shop of a money-changer.

"She directly invited me to sit down near her, and began the conversation by saying, 'Be not, my dear sir, surprised, that I quitted you just now so abruptly: but I did not think it prudent before that merchant to give anything like a favourable answer to the acknowledgment you made of my having inspired you with sentiments of affection. Far, however, from being offended at the confession, I own to you, it afforded me great pleasure to hear you say that I was not indifferent to you; and I esteem myself happy in having acquired the regard of a man of your worth and merit. I know not what impression the sight of me may have made upon you, but with respect to myself, I can assure you, that I felt on the very first moment I saw you, a very great inclination towards you. Ever since yesterday morning I have thought of nothing but what you said, and my haste and anxiety to discover you this morning was so great, that it ought to be sufficient to convince you that you by no means displease me.' 'Madam,' I exclaimed, transported with love, and filled with delight, 'nothing I could possibly hear, could give me half so much pleasure as what you have now had the goodness to say to me. It is impossible for any one to feel a stronger regard than I have done for you, from the first happy moment I set my eyes upon you. They were quite dazzled with so many charms, and my heart yielded without the least resistance.' 'Let us not then,' she said, interrupting me, 'lose any time in useless speeches; I do not doubt your sincerity, and you shall immediately be convinced of mine. Will you do me the honour of visiting my house? Or if you had rather, I will accompany you.' 'Madam,' replied I, 'I am quite a stranger in this city, and have only lodgings at a khan, which is by no means a proper place to receive a lady of your rank and quality. It will surely be much better for you to have the goodness to acquaint me with your residence; where I shall be delighted to have the honour of waiting upon you.' The lady consented to this plan. 'On Thursday next,' said she, 'which is the day after to-morrow, come directly after mid-day prayers into the street called Devotion-street. You have only to inquire for the house of Abon Schamma, surnamed Bercour, and formerly chief of the emirs: at that place you will find me.' Having said this, we separated; and I passed the whole of the next day with the greatest impatience.

"When Thursday came, I got up very early, and dressed myself in the handsomest robe I had. I put a purse, containing fifty pieces of gold, into my pocket, and I set out mounted upon an ass, which I had ordered the day before, and accompanied by the man of whom I had hired it. When we were come into Devotion-street, I desired the owner of the ass to inquire whereabouts the house, which I was seeking after, was; some person immediately pointed it out, and he then conducted me to it. I alighted at the door, rewarded the man very liberally, and dismissed him; desiring him at the same time to observe well the house at which he left me, and not fail to return for me the next morning, in order to take me back to the khan of Mesour.

"I knocked at the door, when two little slaves, as white as snow, very neatly dressed, immediately came and opened it. 'Come in, sir, if you please,' they said, 'our mistress has been waiting very impatiently for you. For two whole days she has never once ceased talking of you.' I went into a court, and observed a pavilion, raised about seven steps from the ground, and sur-

rounded with some trellis-work, which divided it from a very beautiful garden. Besides some trees, which served at the same time both for embellishment and shelter from the rays of the sun, there was an infinite number of others, which were loaded with all kinds of fruit. I was charmed with the warbling of a great many birds, which mingled their notes with the murmurs of a fountain, that threw its water to a vast height, in the midst of a parterre, enamelled with flowers. The fountain also was a very pleasing sight. Four large gilt dragons were seen at the four angles of the reservoir, which was exactly square; and these dragons threw up the water in great abundance, and clearer and more brilliant than rock crystal. This place was so full of beauties, that it gave me a very high idea of the conquest I had made. The two little slaves desired me to go into a saloon, that was magnificently furnished; and while one of them went to inform her mistress of my arrival, the other remained with me, and pointed out all the beauties of the saloon.

"I had not been long in this place, before the lady, with whom I was so much in love, made her appearance, adorned with the finest diamonds and pearls, but she appeared still more brilliant from the lustre of her eyes than from that of her jewels. Her figure, which was now no longer concealed by her walking-dress, as when I met her in the city, seemed to me to be the finest and most striking in the whole world. I can never express to you the delight we experienced at again beholding each other; indeed, the strongest description would do injustice to our feelings. I can only say, that after the first compliments were over, we both sat down on a sofa, where we conversed together with the greatest satisfaction imaginable. They then served up the most delicate and exquisite dishes. We sat down to table, and after our repast, we recommenced our conversation, which lasted till the evening set in. They then brought us some most excellent wine, and also some dried fruits, well adapted to excite a desire for drinking; and we drank to the sound of instruments, on which some slaves played, and accompanied at the same time with their voices. The lady of the house also sung herself, and by this completely confirmed her conquest, and rendered me the most passionate of lovers. In short, I passed the whole night in a series of all kinds of delightful pleasures.

"The next morning, having first very slyly put the purse with fifty pieces of gold in it, which I had brought with me, under her pillow, I got up and bid her adieu. Before I went, she asked me when I would return again. 'I promise you, madam,' I replied, 'to come back this evening.' She seemed delighted with this answer, conducted me herself to the door, and, at parting, she conjured me not to forget my promise.

"The same man, who had brought me the day before, was now waiting for me with his ass. I immediately mounted, and returned to the khan of Mesrour. In dismissing the man, I told him I would not pay him, but that he might come again with his ass after dinner, at the hour I fixed.

"As soon as I was returned to my khan, my first business was to go and purchase a fine lamb and several sorts of cakes, which I sent as a present to the lady by a porter. I then transacted my more important affairs, till the owner of the ass arrived, when I went with him to the lady's house. She received me with as much joy as on the day before, and regaled me in quite as magnificent a style. When I left her the next morning, I put, as before, a purse, containing fifty pieces of gold, under the pillow, and returned to the khan of Mesrour.

"I continued thus to visit the lady every day, and each time I left a purse with fifty pieces of gold in it. I pursued this plan till the merchants, to whom I had given my merchandise to dispose of, and whom I visited regularly twice

a week, had nothing more of mine in their hands. I then found myself without any money, or the least chance of obtaining any.

"In this horrid state, I was ready to give myself up to despair. I went out of my khan, without knowing what I was about, and walked towards the castle, where there was a great multitude of people collected to be present at a spectacle which was given by the sultan of Egypt. When I came to the spot where the crowd was collected, I mixed with the thickest part of it; and by chance I found myself near a gentleman very well mounted, and very handsomely dressed. To the pommel of his saddle there was fastened a little bag half open, from which a green string hung out. By touching the outside of the bag, I thought I discovered, that the green string which hung down, belonged to a purse that was within side. At the very moment I was forming this opinion, a porter, carrying a large bundle of wood, passed so close to him on the other side of his horse, that he was obliged to turn towards him in order to prevent the wood from touching him, and tearing his dress. The devil at this moment tempted me; and laying hold of the string with one hand, while with the other I enlarged the opening of the bag, I drew out the purse without being perceived by any one. It was very heavy, and I did not doubt but it was filled either with gold or silver.

"The porter was no sooner gone past but the person on horseback, who seemed to have had some suspicion of my intention, while his head was turned away, instantly put his hand into the bag, and missing the purse, he gave me such a blow that I fell to the ground. They who saw this violent attack, directly began to take my part; some seized the bridle of his horse to stop him, and asked him what he meant by thus knocking me down; and how he durst thus ill-treat a Mussulman. 'What business is this of yours?' he answered in an angry tone. 'I know what I am about; he is a thief.' At these words I got up; when, on seeing me, every one took my part, and said he asserted a falsehood; for it was very improbable that a young man of my appearance and manner could be guilty of so infamous an action as he laid to my charge. In short, they kept persisting in my innocence; and while they were holding his horse in order to favour my escape, unfortunately for me one of the officers of the police came by, accompanied by some of his men. He came up to us, and inquired what had happened. Every one immediately accused the man on horseback with having used me ill, under the pretence that I had robbed him.

"The officer of the police, however, was by no means satisfied with this account. He asked the gentleman on horseback if he suspected any one besides me of having robbed him. The latter replied in the negative, and informed the officer of the reasons which he had for believing that he was not mistaken in his suspicions. After having attentively listened to him, the officer ordered his attendants to arrest and search me. They instantly obeyed; and one of them, discovering the purse, held it publicly up to view. This disgrace was too much for me to bear, and I fainted away. The officer of the police then desisted them to bring the purse to him.

"As soon as the officer had taken the purse, he asked the man on horseback if that was his, and how much money there was in it. The latter immediately knew it to be the same which had been taken from him, and assured the officer there were twenty sequins in it. The judge instantly opened it, and finding exactly that sum in it, he returned it. After this he ordered me before him: 'Young man,' said he, 'confess the truth: acknowledge that it was you who stole the purse, and do not wait till I order you to the torture to make you confess.' Holding down my head, I reflected within myself, that if I denied the fact, as the purse was found upon me, they could only consider it as a falsehood and an evasion; to avoid therefore being doubly punished, both as a

liar and a thief, I raised my head and acknowledged that I had taken it. * I had no sooner made this confession than the officer, having first taken down the evidence, ordered my right hand to be cut off. This sentence was executed upon the spot, and excited the compassion of all the spectators : and I observed the accuser himself was not less affected than the rest. The judge indeed wished to punish me still farther by cutting off one of my feet, but I implored the person, from whom I had taken the purse, to intercede for me with the judge to omit that part of the sentence ; he did so, and obtained his request.

"The officer was no sooner gone on, than the injured person came up to me. 'I am convinced,' said he to me, and at the same time offered the purse, 'that necessity alone compelled you to commit so disgraceful an action, and one so unworthy a young man of your appearance. Here is this fatal purse, take it ; and I am truly sorry for the misfortune it has occasioned you.' Having said this he left me ; and as I was very weak and faint, from the quantity of blood I had lost, some people, who lived in that neighbourhood, were so kind and compassionate as to take me home with them, and give me a glass of wine. They also dressed my arm, and put my hand, which had been cut off, in a piece of linen cloth, and I fastened it to my girdle.

"When I got back to the khan of Mesroul, I did not find that assistance there which I stood so much in need of. It was, however, I thought, hazarding a great deal to go and present myself to the young lady. 'She will not,' said I to myself, 'wish to see me any more, when she shall have been informed of the infamous action I have been guilty of.' I nevertheless determined to pursue this plan, and as soon as the crowd who had followed me were dispersed, I went by the most unfrequented streets to her house. When I arrived, I found myself so weak and worn out from pain and fatigue, that I instantly threw myself on a sofa, taking care to keep my right arm under my robe, as I was anxious she should not see the state in which it was.

"In the mean time, the lady being informed of my arrival, and that I seemed very ill, came to me in the greatest haste, and seeing me pale and faint, 'My dear soul,' she cried, 'what is the matter with you ?' I dissembled the real cause, and in answer told her, that I had a most violent headache, which very much tormented me. At this she appeared much afflicted. 'Sit down,' she replied, for I had risen to receive her, 'and tell me how this has happened to you. You were very well the last time I had the pleasure of seeing you here. There is surely something else which you conceal from me. Tell me, I beg of you, what it is.' As I remained silent, instead of answering her, the tears fell from my eyes. 'I cannot comprehend,' added she, 'what can possibly cause you so much affliction? Have I unintentionally given you any cause ? Do you come to tell me you no longer love me ?' 'It is not that, madam,' I replied, 'and even a suspicion of the sort augments my misery still more.'

"I could not make up my mind to discover the true cause of my illness to her. When the evening approached, supper was served up. She entreated me to eat, but as I could only make use of my left hand, I requested her to excuse me, saying I had no appetite. 'It would return,' said she, 'if you would unfold to me what you so obstinately conceal. Your dislike doubtless arises from the pain you suffer by remaining silent.' 'Alas, madam,' I replied, 'it is very necessary for me to make that determination, and to adhere to it.' I had no sooner said this, than she poured me out a glass of wine, and presenting it to me, 'Drink this,' she replied, 'it will give you both strength and courage.' I then held out my left hand, and took the glass.

"I had no sooner received the glass than my tears flowed afresh, and my sighs increased. 'Why do you lament and sigh so bitterly ?' said the lady to me. 'Why do you take the glass in your left hand rather than your right ?'

'Alas, madam,' I replied, 'excuse me, I entreat you, for I have a swelling on my right hand.' 'Show me this tumour,' said she, 'and I will open it for you.' I still excused myself by saying it was not yet in a state proper for that operation; I then drank all the contents of the glass, which was a very large one. The strength of the wine, joined to my fatigue, and the low state in which I was, soon made me very drowsy, and I fell into a profound sleep that lasted till the next morning.

"While I was in this state, the lady, wishing to know what accident had happened to my right hand, lifted up my robe, which concealed it, and saw, as you may conjecture, with the greatest astonishment, that it was cut off, and that I had got it with me, wrapped up in a linen cloth. She had now no difficulty in comprehending why I so strongly resisted all the entreaties she made me; and she passed the night in thinking of the disgrace that had happened to me, not doubting but that my love for her had been the cause of it.

"When I awoke the next morning, I perceived by her countenance that she was very much afflicted. She did not, however, utter a word to me on the subject, that she might not give me any pain. She desired some thick jelly made from chickens, that she had ordered on purpose for me, to be served up. She obliged me both to eat and drink, in order, as she said, to recruit my strength, of which I had so much need. I then wished to take my leave of her, but she took hold of my robe and detained me. 'I will not suffer you,' she said, 'to go from hence; for although you will not tell me so, I am persuaded that I am the cause of the misfortune which has happened to you. The poignant grief which I feel will not suffer me to live long, but before I die I must execute a design which I meditate in your favour.' Having said this, she ordered some of her people to go for an officer of justice, and some witnesses, and made him draw up a bequest of all her fortune to me. Having then dismissed them, after paying them handsomely for their trouble, she opened a large chest, where all the purses that I had ever brought her since the commencement of our connexion had been placed. 'There they all are,' said she to me, 'just as you left them. I have not touched one of them. Here is the key, take it, for they belong to you.' I thanked her for her kindness and generosity. 'I do not,' added she, 'reckon this as anything in comparison with what I intend to do for you. Nor shall I be satisfied till I die, to prove to you how much I love you.' I conjured her by every tie of love to give up so dreadful a resolution, but I was unable to divert her thoughts from it; the sorrow and chagrin she felt at seeing me so maimed brought on a serious illness, which at the end of five or six weeks terminated in her death.

"After mourning for her loss as much as became me, I took possession of all her fortune, and everything which, as she had informed me, belonged to her; and the sesamè which you sold for me was part of her property."

When the young man of Bagdad had finished his relation, he added, "What you have now heard ought to be a sufficient excuse for my having eaten in your company with my left hand. I am much obliged to you for the trouble you have taken on my account. I cannot enough applaud your fidelity and probity; and as I have, thank God, a very plentiful fortune, although I have expended a great deal, I must beg that you will accept as a present the small sum for which you sold the sesamè, and which you now are in my debt for. I have besides another proposal to make to you. Being unable to remain with any comfort or satisfaction to myself at Cairo, after the melancholy accident I have mentioned, I am resolved to leave it, and never to return again. If you like to accompany me, we will trade in common together, and we will divide the profits we make into equal shares."

When the young man of Bagdad (said the Christian merchant) had concluded his history, I said to him, "I return you, sir, my most grateful thanks for the present you have done me the favour to make me; and with respect to the proposal of travelling with you, I accept it with all my heart, and assure you that your interest will be always as much my concern as my own."

We fixed a day for our departure, and when it came we began our journey. We passed through Syria and Mesopotamia; we travelled over Persia, and after visiting for some time many cities, we at length came, sire, to your capital. After some little time, the young man informed me that he was very desirous, and, in fact, had taken the resolution of going back into Persia, and of settling there. We then made up our accounts, and separated, perfectly satisfied with each other. He departed, and I remained in this city, where I have the honour of being employed in the service of your majesty. This is the history which I had to recount to you, and does it not seem to your majesty much more surprising than that of the little hunchback?

The sultan of Casgar was very angry with the Christian merchant. "Thou art very bold and impudent," said he to the merchant, "to dare to make a comparison between the recital of a history so trifling and unworthy my attention with that of my hunchback. Dost thou flatter thyself that thou canst persuade me that the stale adventures of a young debauchee are more wonderful than those of my buffoon? I will in truth hang all four of you to revenge his death."

At these words the purveyor, terrified, threw himself at the sultan's feet: "Sire," he cried, "I entreat your majesty to suspend your just wrath, and to listen to me; and if the narrative I shall have the honour to lay before your majesty shall seem to you more interesting than that of the little hunchback, that you will do us the favour to extend your pardon to us all." "Speak," said the sultan, "I grant thy request." The purveyor then began as follows:—

THE STORY TOLD BY THE PURVEYOR OF THE SULTAN OF CASGAR.

I WAS yesterday, sire, invited by a man of great respectability and fortune to the wedding of one of his daughters. I did not fail to be at his house by the appointed hour, and found a large company composed of the best inhabitants of the city, and of various professions. When the ceremony was over, the feast, which was very magnificent, was served up. We sat down to table, and each person eat what was most agreeable to his taste. Amongst other things, there was a dish dressed with garlic, which was so very excellent, that every one was anxious to get a little of it. We could not, however, but remark that one of the guests did not seem desirous of eating any of it, although the dish stood directly before him. We invited him to help himself to some, as we did; but he requested us not to press him to eat any. "I shall be very careful," said he, "how I touch a ragout dressed with garlic. I have not yet forgotten what was the consequence of it to me the last time I tasted one." We then requested him to inform us what had been the cause of such an aversion from garlic, as he seemed to have. The master of the house, however, called out, without giving him time to answer our inquiries, "Is it thus you honour my table; this ragout is delicious; do not therefore pretend not to eat of it; you must do me that favour like the rest of the company." "Sir," replied his guest, who was a merchant of Bagdad, "do not suppose that I act thus out of any notions of false delicacy. I certainly will obey your commands if you insist upon it, but it must only be on condition, that after eating of it you will permit me to wash my hands forty times with alkali, forty times with the ashes

of the same plant from which that is procured, and as many times with soap. I hope you will not take my mode of procedure ill, but it is in consequence of an oath I have taken, and which I do not wish to break, never to eat a ragout with garlic but on those conditions."

As the master of the house would not dispense with the merchant's eating some of the ragout, he ordered his servants to get some basons ready, containing a solution of alkali, ashes of the same plant, and soap, that the merchant might wash himself as often as he pleased. After having given these orders, he said to the merchant, "Come then, now do as we do, and eat; neither the alkali, the ashes of the plant, nor the soap, shall be deficient."

Although the merchant was enraged at this sort of violence that was done to him, he put out his hand, and took a small quantity of the ragout, which he put to his mouth with fear and trembling, and eat with a repugnance, which very much astonished us all. But what we remarked with still greater surprise was, that he had only four fingers, and no thumb, and till this moment no person had noticed this circumstance, although he had eaten of several other dishes. The master of the house then spoke, "You seem to have lost your thumb," said he; "how did such an accident happen? There must probably have been some singular circumstances connected with the occasion of it; and you will afford this company a great pleasure if you will relate them."

"Sir," replied the guest, "it is not only on my right hand that I have no thumb, my left is also in the same state." He held out his left hand at the same time, that we might be convinced he spoke the truth. "Nor is this all," he added, "I have lost the great toe from each of my feet. I have been maimed in this manner through a most unheard-of adventure, and which, if you will have the patience to listen to it, I have no objection to relate. And I think it will not excite your astonishment more than it will your compassion. First of all, however, permit me to wash my hands." Having said this, he got up from table, and after washing his hands one hundred and twenty times, he sat down again, and related his history in the following terms:—

"You must know, gentlemen, that my father lived at Bagdad during the reign of the caliph Haroun Alraschid, where I also was born, and he was reckoned one of the richest merchants in that city. But as he was a man very fond of pleasure, and one who loved dissipation of every sort, he very much neglected his affairs, and instead therefore of inheriting a large fortune at his death, I encountered great difficulties, and was obliged to make use of the greatest economy to pay the debts he left behind him. With great attention, however, and care, I at last discharged them all, and my small fortune then began to assume a favourable appearance.

"One morning, when I was opening my shop, a lady, mounted upon a mule, accompanied by a eunuch, and followed by two slaves,* passed close to my door, and stopped. The eunuch directly assisted her to alight by taking hold of her hand; he then said to her, 'I am afraid, madam, you have arrived too soon; you see there is no one yet come to the bezestein. If you had believed what I said, you would not have had the trouble of waiting.' She looked everywhere about, and finding that there was in fact no other shop open but mine, she came up, and saluting me, requested permission to sit down in it till the other merchants were arrived. I returned such an answer as became me.

"When the lady had entered my shop and sat down, as she observed that there was no one to be seen in the bezestein except the eunuch and myself, she took off her veil in order to enjoy the air. I had never before seen any one so beautiful; and to see, and to be passionately in love, were with me one and the same thing. I kept my eyes constantly fixed upon her, and I thought

she looked as if my attention was not unpleasing to her, for she gave me full opportunity during the whole time of beholding her; and she did not put down her veil till the fear of any one's approach obliged her.

"After she had adjusted her dress as it was before, she informed me that she was come with the intention of looking at some of the finest and richest kinds of stuff, which she described to me, and inquired whether I had any such. 'Alas! madam,' I said 'I am but a young merchant, who have not long begun business, and am not yet sufficiently rich to trade so largely; and it is a great mortification to me to have none of the things for which you have come into the bezestein. But to save you the trouble of going from shop to shop, I will, as soon as the merchants come, if you please, go and get whatever you wish from them. They will tell me exactly the lowest price, and you will thus be enabled, without having the trouble of seeking any farther, to execute all your commissions.' To this she consented, and I entered into conversation with her which lasted a long time, as I made her believe that those merchants who had the stuffs she wanted were not yet come.

"I was not less charmed with her wit and understanding than I had been with her person; I was however at last compelled to deprive myself of the pleasure of her conversation, and I went to inquire for the stuffs she wanted. When she had fixed upon those she wished to have, I informed her that they came to five thousand drachms of silver. I then made them up into a parcel and gave them to the eunuch, who put them under his arm. She immediately got up, and after taking leave of me she went away. I followed her with my eyes till she reached the gate of the bezestein, nor did I cease gazing at her till she mounted her mule.

"The lady was no sooner out of sight than I recollected that my love had caused me to be guilty of a great fault. It had indeed so wholly engrossed my attention that I not only omitted taking the money for the goods, but had even neglected to inquire who she was and where she lived. This led me immediately to reflect that I was accountable for a very large sum of money to several merchants, who would not perhaps have the patience to wait. I then went and excused myself to them in the best way I could, telling them I knew the lady very well. I returned home as much in love as ever, although very much embarrassed by the idea of so heavy a debt.

"I requested my creditors to wait eight days for their money, which they agreed to do. On the eighth morning they did not fail to come and request payment, but I again begged them to grant me the favour of a little farther delay, in which they had the goodness to acquiesce; but on the very next morning I saw the lady coming along on the same mule, with the same number of persons attending her, and exactly at the same hour as at first.

"She came directly to my shop. 'I have made you wait,' she said, 'a little for your money, on account of the stuffs which I had the other day; but I have at last brought it you. Carry it to a money-changer, and see that it is all good, and the right sum.' The eunuch, who had the money, went with me to a money-changer's; the sum was exactly correct, and all good silver. After this I had the happiness of a long conversation with the lady till all the shops in the bezestein were open. Although we conversed only upon common topics, she nevertheless gave a certain turn to whatever she said, that threw a grace and novelty over the whole discourse, and convinced me I was not mistaken when, from the first time I saw her, I thought that she possessed much wit and good sense.

"As soon as the merchants were come, and had opened their shops, I took what I was indebted to each of those from whom I had purchased the stuffs on credit, and I had now no difficulty in getting others from them, which the lady had desired to see. I carried back with me as many as came to a thousand

pieces of gold, all of which she took away with her, not only without paying for them, but without saying a word on the subject, or even informing me who she was or where she lived. What astonished me the most was, that she ran no risk, and hazarded nothing, while I remained without the least security, and without any chance of being indemnified in case I should not see her again. 'She has paid me, it is true,' I said to myself, 'a very large sum of money, but she has left me with a debt which is much more considerable. Is it possible she can intend to cheat me, and has thus, by paying me for the first quantity, only enticed me on to my more certain ruin? The merchants themselves do not know her, and depend only upon me for payment.'

"My love was not so powerful as to prevent me from making these distressing reflections. My fears kept increasing from day to day for one entire month, which passed on without my having any intelligence whatever of the lady. The merchants at last began to grow very impatient, and in order to satisfy them I was going to sell off everything I had, when one morning I saw her coming with exactly the same attendants as before. 'Take your weights,' she said to me, 'and weigh the gold I have brought you.' These few words put an end to all my fears and redoubled my love.

"Before she began to count out the gold, she addressed several questions to me, and among other things, she asked me if I were married. I told her I was not, nor ever had been. Giving then the gold to the eunuch, she said to him, 'Come, let us have your assistance to settle our affairs.' The eunuch could not help smiling, and taking me aside, he made me weigh the gold. While I was thus employed, the eunuch whispered in my ear as follows: 'I have only to look at you to be perfectly convinced you are desperately in love with my mistress, and I am only surprised that you have not sufficient courage to discover your passion to her. She loves you, if possible, to a still greater excess. Don't suppose that she is in want of any of your stuffs: she only comes here because you have inspired her with the most violent passion, and this was the reason of her asking you whether you were married. You have only to make known your sentiments by speech, and if you wish it, she will not stop short even of marrying you.' 'It is true,' I replied to the eunuch, 'that I felt the sensations of love arise in my breast the very first moment I beheld your lady, but I never thought of aspiring to the hope of having pleased her. I am wholly her own, and shall not fail to remember the good office you have done me.'

"As soon as I had finished weighing the gold, and while I was putting it back into the bag, the eunuch went to the lady and said that I was very well satisfied. This was the particular expression they had agreed upon between themselves. The lady, who was seated, immediately got up and went away, telling me first, that she would send back the eunuch, and that I must do exactly as he directed.

"I then went to all the merchants to whom I was indebted, and paid them. After this I waited with the greatest impatience for the arrival of the eunuch, but it was some days before he made his appearance. At length however he arrived.

"I conducted myself in the most kind and friendly manner towards him, and made many inquiries after the health of his mistress. 'You certainly are,' he said, 'the happiest lover in all the world; she is absolutely dying for love of you. It is impossible you can be more anxious to see her than she is for your company, and if she were able to follow her own inclinations and act as she likes, she would instantly come to you, and gladly pass every moment of her future life with you.' 'From her noble air and manner,' I replied, 'I have concluded she is a lady of great rank and consequence.' 'Nor are you deceived in this opinion,' said the eunuch; 'she is the favourite of Zobeid, the

caliph's wife, who is the more strongly attached to her as she brought her up from her earliest infancy, and her confidence in her is so great that she employs her in every commission she wishes to have executed. From the desire which she has of being married, she has told her mistress, Zobeidè, that she has cast her eyes upon you, and has asked her consent to the match. Zobeidè has agreed to it, but has requested, in the first instance, to see you, that she may judge whether her favourite has made a good choice, and in case she approves of you, she will herself be at the expense of the wedding. You may be sure therefore that your happiness is certain. As you have pleased the favourite, you will equally please her mistress, whose sole wish is to afford her pleasure, and who has not the least desire of putting any restraint upon her inclination. The only thing therefore to be done is to go to the palace, and this was the reason of my coming hither. You must now tell me upon what you will resolve.' 'My resolution is already taken,' I replied, 'and I am ready to follow you when and wherever you choose to conduct me.' 'That is well,' said the eunuch; 'but you must recollect that no man is permitted to enter the apartments in the palace belonging to the ladies, and that you can be introduced there only by such means as will keep it a profound secret. The favourite has taken her measures for the purpose, and you must on your part do everything to facilitate it; but above all things, you must be discreet, or it may cost you your life.'

'I assured him that I would do everything exactly as he ordered me. 'You must then,' he added, 'this evening, at the very close of day, go to the mosque which the lady Zobeidè has ordered to be built on the banks of the Tigris, and you must wait there till we come to you.' I agreed to everything he wished, and waited with the greatest impatience till the day was passed. When the evening commenced I set out and went to prayers, which began an hour and a half before sunset, at the appointed mosque, and remained there till the very last.

'Almost immediately after prayers I saw a boat come to shore, in which all the rowers were eunuchs. They landed, and brought a great number of chests into the mosque. This being done, they all went away except one, whom I soon recognised to be the same that had accompanied the lady, and who had spoken with me that very morning. Directly after I saw the lady herself come in, I went up to her, and was informing her that I was ready to obey all her orders, when she said, 'We have no time to lose in conversation.' She then opened one of the chests and ordered me to get in. 'It is,' she added, 'absolutely necessary both for your safety and mine. Fear nothing, and leave me to manage everything.' I had gone too far to recede at this moment; I did therefore as she desired, and she immediately shut down the top of the chest and locked it. The eunuch who was in her confidence then called the other eunuchs, who had brought the chests, and ordered them to be carried on board the boat again. The lady and the eunuch then embarked, and they began to row towards the apartments of Zobeidè.

'While I was in this situation, I had the leisure to make the most serious reflections, and considering the danger I was in, I repented most heartily of having exposed myself to it. I both swore and prayed; but one was now as equally useless and out of season as the other.

'The boat came to shore exactly before gate of the caliph's palace; they landed the chests, which were all carried to the apartment of the officer of the eunuchs, who keeps the key of that belonging to the ladies, and who never permits anything to be carried in without having first examined it. The officer was gone to bed, and it was therefore necessary to wake him, and make him get up. He was however excessively out of humour at having his rest thus

disturbed and broken in upon. He quarrelled with the favourite because she returned so late. 'You shall not finish your business so soon as you think,' said he to her, 'for not one of these chests shall pass till I have opened and examined them most narrowly.' He at the same time commanded the eunuch to bring them to him one after the other that he might open them. They began by taking that in which I was shut up, and set it down before him. At this I was more terrified than I can express, and thought the last moment of my life was approaching.

"The favourite, who had the key, declared she would not give it him, nor suffer that chest to be opened. 'You very well know,' she said, 'that I do not bring anything in here but what is for our mistress, Zobeidè. This chest is filled with very valuable articles that have been entrusted to me by some merchants who are just arrived. There are also a great many bottles of water from the fountain of Zemzem at Mecca, and if any one of them should happen to be broken, all the other things will be spoiled, and you will have to be answerable for them. The wife of the Commander of the Faithful too will know how to punish your insolence.' She spoke this in so peremptory a tone that the officer had not courage to persist in his resolution of opening either the chest in which I was, or any of the others. 'Get along then,' he angrily cried out; 'go.' The door of the ladies' apartment was immediately opened, and the chests were all carried in.

"They were scarcely deposited there before I suddenly heard the cry of, 'Here's the caliph; the caliph is come.' These words increased my fears to a still greater degree, and I was almost ready to die on the spot. It was in fact the caliph himself. 'What have you got in those chests?' said he to the favourite. 'Commander of the Faithful,' she replied, 'they are some stuffs lately arrived, which your majesty's lady wishes to have shown to her.' 'Open them,' said he, 'and let me see them also.' She endeavoured to excuse herself by saying they were only fit for females, and that it would deprive Zobeidè of the pleasure of seeing them before any one else. 'Open them, I tell you,' he answered; 'I command you.' She still remonstrated, and said that the queen would be very angry if she did as his majesty ordered. 'No, no,' he replied, 'I will promise you that she shall not reproach you; only open them, and do not make me wait so long.'

"It was then absolutely necessary to obey. My fears were again excited; and I tremble even now, every time I think of it. The caliph seated himself, and the favourite, ordering all the chests, one after the other, to be brought, opened them, and displayed the stuffs before him. In order to prolong the business as much as possible, she pointed out to him the peculiar beauties of each individual stuff, in hopes of tiring his patience quite out; but she did not succeed. As the favourite was not less anxious than myself not to have that chest opened, in which I was, she did not hurry in having them brought to her. There now remained only one to examine. 'Come,' said the caliph, 'let us make haste and finish; we have only now to see what is in that chest.' At this instant I knew not whether I was alive or dead, nor could I possibly hope to escape so great a danger.

"When the favourite saw that the caliph was determined she should open the chest in which I was, she said, 'Your majesty must absolutely excuse me, and must do me the favour not to see what is in that chest; there are some things which I cannot show, except in the presence of the queen, my mistress.' 'Well then,' replied the caliph, 'I am content; let them carry the chests in.' The eunuchs immediately took them up, and placed them in her chamber, where I again began as it were to breathe.

"As soon as the eunuchs who brought the chests in were retired, she quickly

opened that in which I was a prisoner. 'Come out,' she cried, and showing me a staircase which led to a chamber above, 'Go up, and wait for me there.' She had hardly shut the door after me, when the caliph came in, and sat down upon the very chest in which I had been locked up. The motive of this visit was a certain fit of curiosity, which did not in the least relate to me. This prince only wished to ask the favourite some questions as to what she had seen and heard in the city. They conversed a long time together; he at last left her, and went back to his own apartment.

"She was no sooner at liberty than she came into the apartment in which I was, and made a thousand excuses for the alarms she had caused me. 'My anxiety and fear,' she said, 'was not less than your own. Of this you ought not to doubt, since I suffered both for you, from my great regard for you, and for myself, on account of the great danger I can from a discovery. Any other in my place, would not, I think, have had the address and courage to extricate themselves from so delicate a situation. It required not less boldness than presence of mind, or rather, it was necessary to feel the love for you I do to get out of such an embarrassment; but compose yourself now, there is nothing more to fear.' After we had entertained ourselves some time with mutual proofs of our affection, 'But,' she said, 'you want repose; you are to sleep here, and I will not fail to present you to my mistress, Zobeidè, some time to-morrow. This is a very easy matter, as the caliph is with her only at night.' Encouraged by this account, I slept with the greatest tranquillity, or if my rest was at all interrupted, it was by the pleasant ideas that arose in my mind from the thoughts of possessing a lady of so much understanding and beauty.

"The next morning, before the favourite of Zobeidè introduced me to her mistress, she instructed me how I ought to conduct myself in her presence. She informed me almost word for word what Zobeidè would ask me, and dictated such answers as I should make to her. She then led me into a hall, where everything was very magnificent, very rich, and very appropriate. I had not been long there before twenty female slaves of a certain age, all dressed in rich and uniform habits, came out from the cabinet of Zobeidè, and immediately ranged themselves before the throne in two equal rows, with the greatest modesty and propriety. They were followed by twenty other female slaves very young, and dressed exactly like the first, with this difference only, that their dresses were much gayer. Zobeidè appeared in the midst of the latter with the most majestic air. She was so loaded with jewels that she could scarcely walk. She went immediately and seated herself upon the throne. I must not forget to mention, that her favourite lady accompanied her, and remained standing close on her right hand, while the female slaves were crowded all together at a greater distance on both sides the throne.

"As soon as the consort of the caliph was seated, the slaves who came in first made a sign for me to approach. I advanced in the midst of two ranks, which they formed for that purpose, and prostrated myself till my head touched the carpet which was under the feet of the princess. She ordered me to rise, and honoured me so far as to ask my name, my family, and the state of my fortune; in my answers to all of which, I gave her perfect satisfaction. I was confident of this, not only from her manner, but from a thousand kind things she had the condescension to say to me. 'I have great satisfaction,' said she, 'in finding that my daughter (this was the title by which she distinguished her favourite)—for as such I shall ever regard her after the care I have taken of her education—has made such a choice. I entirely approve of it, and agree to your marriage. I will myself give orders for the preparations necessary in this affair. But before the ceremony takes place, I have occasion for my daughter for the next ten days, and during this time I will take an opportunity of speaking to the

caliph, and obtain his consent; till this period has passed, you shall remain here, and shall be well taken care of.

"I spent these ten days in the female apartments, and during the whole of this time I was deprived of the pleasure of seeing the favourite even for one moment: but I was so well treated through her orders that I had great reason to be satisfied in every other respect.

"Zobeidè, in the mean time, informed the caliph of the determination she had taken to marry her favourite; and this prince not only left her at liberty to act as she pleased in this matter, but even gave a large sum of money for a dowry. The intermediate time, at length, elapsed, and Zobeidè had got a proper contract of marriage prepared with all the necessary forms. Preparations for the nuptials were made; musicians and dancers of both sexes were ordered to hold themselves in readiness, and nine days were spent, in which the greatest joy and festivity reigned through the palace. The tenth was the day appointed for the concluding ceremony of the marriage; the favourite was conducted to a bath on one side, and I to one on the other. In the evening I sat down to table, and they served me with all sorts of dishes and ragouts; and among other things there was a ragout made with garlic, similar to that of which you have now forced me to partake. I found it so excellent that I hardly touched any other dish. But unfortunately for me when I rose from table, I satisfied myself with only wiping my hands, instead of well washing them; this was a negligence that I believe I had never been before guilty of.

"As it was now night, they supplied the place of daylight by a grand illumination in all the ladies' apartments. Instruments of music resounded through the building; they danced, they played a thousand sports, and all the palace re-echoed with exclamations of joy and pleasure. They introduced my bride and myself into a large hall, where we were seated upon two thrones. The females who attended on her, changed her dress several times, as was the general practice on these occasions; and they also painted her face in different ways according to a custom, peculiar to the day of marriage. Every time they thus changed her dress they presented her to me.

"When all these ceremonies were finished, they conducted us into the bridal chamber, where we were no sooner left by ourselves than I approached my bride to embrace her. But instead of returning my transports, she forcibly repulsed me, and called out in the most lamentable and violent manner; so much so that the women all rushed into the apartment, desirous of learning the reason of her screams. As for myself, my astonishment was so great that I stood quite motionless, without having even power to ask the cause of all this. 'What can possibly have happened to you,' they said to my bride, 'in the short time since we left you? Inform us, pray, that we may help you.' 'Take away,' she cried, 'instantly take from my sight that infamous man.' 'Alas, madam,' I exclaimed, 'how can I possibly have deservedly incurred your anger?' 'You are a villain,' said she, in the greatest rage. 'You have eaten of garlic, and have not washed your hands. Do you think I will suffer a man, who can be guilty of so dirty and so filthy a negligence, to approach and stifle me with his embraces? Lay him on the ground,' she added, speaking to the women, 'and bring me a whip.' They immediately threw me down; and while some held me by the arms, and others by the feet, my wife, who had been very diligently attended to, beat me without the least mercy, as long as she had any strength remaining. She then said to the females, 'Take him to an officer of the police, and order him to cut off that hand with which he fed himself with the garlic ragout.'

"At these words I exclaimed, 'Merciful God! I have been beaten and whipped, and to complete my misfortune I am still further punished by having

my hand cut off; and all for what? Because I have eaten of a ragout made with garlic, and have forgotten to wash my hands! What a trifling cause for such anger and revenge! Plague on the garlic ragout! I wish that the cook that made it, and the slave that served it up, were all at the bottom of the sea.'

"Every one of the women, however, who were present, and had seen me already so severely punished, pitied me very much, when they heard the favourite talk of having my hand cut off. 'My dear sister, and my good lady,' said they to her, 'do not carry your resentment so far. It is true that he is a man who does not understand how to conduct himself, and who seems ignorant of the respect due to your rank. We entreat you, however, not to take any further notice of the fault he has committed, but to pardon him.' 'I am not yet satisfied,' she cried; 'I wish to teach him how to live, and that he should bear such powerful marks of his ill-breeding that he will never forget as long as he lives.' They were not discouraged by this refusal; they threw themselves at her feet, and kissing her hand, 'My good lady,' they cried, 'in the name of God, moderate your anger, and grant us the favour we ask of you.' She did not answer them a single word, but got up, and after abusing me again, went out of the apartment. All the women followed her, and left me quite alone in the greatest affliction imaginable.

"I remained here ten days without ever seeing a soul except an old slave, who brought me something by way of food. I asked her for some information about the favourite. 'She is very ill,' she said, 'on account of the poisonous odour you made her breathe. Why did you not take care to wash your hands after eating of that diabolical ragout?' 'Is it possible, then,' I answered, 'that the delicacy and sensibility of these ladies is so great, and that they can be so vindictive for so slight a fault?' I nevertheless still loved my wife in spite of her cruelty.

"One day the old slave said to me, 'Your bride is cured, she is gone to the bath, and she told me that she intended to come and visit you to-morrow. Have, therefore, a little patience, and endeavour to accommodate yourself to her humour. She is very wise, and indeed very reasonable: and is moreover very much beloved by all the females that are in the service of Zobeidè, our respectable mistress.'

"My wife, in fact, came to see me the next day, and she immediately said to me, 'You must think me very good to come and see you again, after the offence you have given me; but I cannot bring myself to be reconciled to you till I have punished you as you deserve, for not washing your hands after having eaten of the ragout with garlic.' She had no sooner said this than she called to the women, who instantly entered and laid me down upon the ground according to her orders; and after they had bound me, she took a razor, and had the barbarity to cut off my two thumbs and two great toes with her own hands. One of the women immediately applied a certain root to stop the blood; but this did not prevent me from fainting in consequence of both the quantity I lost before the remedy took effect, and the great pain I suffered.

"When I recovered from my fainting-fit, they gave me some wine, in order to recruit my strength and spirits. 'Ah, madam,' I then said to my wife, 'if it should ever fall to my lot again to partake of a ragout with garlic, I swear to you that instead of once I will wash my hands one hundred and twenty times; with alkali, with the ashes of the plant from which alkali is made, and with soap.' 'Well, then,' replied my wife, 'on this condition I will forget what has passed, and live with you as my husband.'

"This is the reason (continued the merchant of Bagdad, addressing himself to all the company) why I refused to eat of the garlic ragout which was before me.

"The women not only applied the root to my wounds, as I have before said, to stop the blood, but they also put some balsam of Mecca to them, which was certain of being unadulterated, since it came from the caliph's own store. Through the virtue of this excellent balsam I was perfectly cured in a very few days. After this, my wife and I lived together as happily as if I had never tasted the garlic ragout. As however I had always been in the habit of enjoying my liberty, I began to grow excessively weary of being constantly shut up in the palace of the caliph; I did not however give my wife any reason to suspect that this was the case, for fear of displeasing her. At last, however, she perceived it; nor indeed did she wish to leave the palace less anxiously than myself. Gratitude alone kept her near Zobeidè. She possessed, however, both courage and ingenuity; and she so well represented to her mistress the constraint I felt myself under, in not being able to live in the city, and associate with men in a similar condition to myself, as I had always been accustomed to do, that this excellent princess had more gratification in depriving herself of the pleasure of having her favourite near her, than in not complying with what we both equally wished.

"It was on this account, that about a month after our marriage I one day perceived my wife come in followed by many eunuchs, each of whom carried a bag of money. When they had retired, my wife said to me, "You have not, it is true, remarked to me the uneasiness and languor which so long a residence in the palace has caused you; but I have nevertheless perceived it, and I have fortunately found out a method to satisfy you. My mistress Zobeidè has permitted us to leave the palace, and here are fifty thousand sequins, which she has presented us with, that we may begin to live comfortably and commodiously in the city. Take ten thousand and go and purchase a house."

"I very soon found one for this sum, and after furnishing it most magnificently, we went to live there. We took with us a great number of slaves of both sexes, and we dressed them in the handsomest manner possible. In short, we began to live the most pleasant kind of life; but alas! it was not of long duration. At the end of a year my wife was taken ill, and a very few days put a period to her existence.

"I should certainly have married again, and continued to live in the most honourable manner at Bagdad; but the desire I felt to see the world inspired me with other views. I sold my house; and after purchasing different sorts of merchandise, I attached myself to a caravan, and travelled into Persia. From thence I took the road to Samarcand, and at last came and established myself in this city."

"This, sire," said the purveyor to the sultan of Casgar, "is the history which the merchant of Bagdad related to the company where I was yesterday." "And it truly comprises some very extraordinary things," replied the sultan, "but yet it is not comparable to that of my little hunchback." The Jewish physician then advanced, and prostrated himself before the throne of the prince; and in getting up, he said to him, "If your majesty will have the goodness to listen to me, I flatter myself that you will be very well satisfied with the history I shall have the honour to relate." "Speak, then," said the sultan; "but if it be not more wonderful than that of the hunchback, do not hope I shall suffer thee to live."

THE STORY TOLD BY THE JEWISH PHYSICIAN.

WHILE I was studying medicine at Damascus, sire, and had even begun to practise that admirable science with some reputation, a slave came to inquire

for me, and desired me to go to the house of the governor of the city to visit a person who was ill. I accordingly went, and was introduced into a chamber where I perceived a very well-made young man, but apparently very much depressed from the pain he was suffering. I saluted him, and went and sat down by his side. He returned no answer to my salutation, but expressed to me by a look that he understood me, and was grateful for my kindness. "Will you do me the favour, sir," I said to him, "to put out your hand, that I may feel your pulse?" When instead of giving me his right hand, as is the usual custom, he presented his left to me. This astonished me very much. "Surely," thought I, "it is a mark of strange ignorance not to know that it is the constant custom always to present the right hand to a physician." I, however, felt his pulse, wrote a prescription, and then took my leave.

I continued to visit him successively for nine days; and every time that I wished to feel his pulse, he still presented his left hand to me. On the tenth day he appeared to be so much recovered, that I told him he had no more occasion for me, or indeed for anything else but to go to the bath. The governor of Damascus, who was present, in order to prove how very well he was satisfied with my abilities and conduct, made me put on a rich robe in his presence, and appointed me on the spot, physician to the hospital of the city, and physician in ordinary to his own house, where I might visit whenever I pleased, as there would constantly be a place provided at his table for me.

The young man also gave me many proofs of his friendship, and requested me to accompany him to the bath. I did so; and when we had gone in and his slaves had undressed him, I perceived that he had lost his right hand. I even remarked that it had not been long cut off; that this was in fact the cause of his disease, which he had concealed from me; and that while the most proper applications were used to cure his arm as quickly as possible, they only called me in to prevent any bad consequences arising from a fever which had come on. I was both astonished and afflicted to see him in that condition. Nor could my countenance conceal the state of my mind. The young man remarked it, and said to me, "Do not be surprised at seeing me without my right hand, I will one day inform you how it happened, and you will then hear a most wonderful and strange adventure."

When we came from the bath, we sat down to table and began to converse together. He asked me if he might, without endangering his health, take a walk out of the city to the garden of the governor; I replied, that it would be very beneficial to him to go into the air. "If so," said he, "and you will like to accompany me, I will there relate my history." I told him I was at his disposal for the rest of the day. He immediately ordered his people to prepare a slight collation, and we set out for the garden of the governor. After walking two or three times round the garden, and after seating ourselves on a carpet, which his people spread under a tree, that formed a delightful shade, the young man thus began the relation of his history.

"I was born at Mousseoul, and am of a family which is one of the most considerable in that city. My father was the eldest of ten children, but amongst this number of brothers he was the only one who had any offspring; and I was his only child. He took great pains with my education, and had me taught everything with which a boy in my situation of life ought to be acquainted.

"I was grown up, and began to associate with the world, when one Friday I went to the noonday prayers in the great mosque of Mousseoul with my father and my uncles. After the prayers were over every one retired, excepting my father and my uncles, who seated themselves on the carpet, which covered the whole floor of the mosque. I sat down with them, and discoursing on various

topics, the conversation insensibly turned on travels. They praised the beauties and peculiarities of some kingdoms, and of their principal towns; but one of my uncles said, that if one might believe the account of an infinity of travellers, there was not in the world a more beautiful country than Egypt, to which all universally agreed. What he related of it gave me such vast ideas, that I from that moment formed the wish of travelling thither. All that my other uncles could say in giving the preference to Bagdad and the Tigris, calling Bagdad the true abode of the Mussulman religion, and the metropolis of all the cities in the world, did not make half so much impression on me. My father maintained the same opinion with that brother, who had spoken in favour of Egypt, which caused me very great pleasure. 'Let people say what they will,' cried he; 'he who has not seen Egypt, has not seen the greatest wonder in the world. The earth is all gold, that is to say, so fertile, that it enriches the inhabitants beyond conception. All the women enchant you either by their beauty or their agreeable manners. If you mention the Nile, what river can be more delightful? What water was ever so pure and delicious? The mud that remains after its overflowings enriches the ground, which produces without any trouble, a thousand times more than other countries do with all the labour, that it costs to cultivate them.' If you cast your eyes on the island, which is formed by the two largest branches of the Nile, what a variety of verdure will gratify them! What a beautiful enamel of all kinds of flowers! What a wondrous quantity of cities, towns, canals, and a thousand other pleasing objects! If you turn on the other side looking towards Ethiopia, how many subjects for admiration! I can only compare the verdure of the many meadows, watered by the various canals in the island, to the brilliancy of emeralds set in silver. Is not Cairo the largest, the richest, the most populous city in the universe? How magnificent the edifices, as well private as public! If you go to the pyramids, you are lost in astonishment; you remain speechless at the sight of those enormous masses of stone, which lose their lofty summits in the clouds: you are forced to confess, that the Pharaohs who employed so many men and such immense riches in the construction of them, surpassed all the monarchs, who have succeeded them, not only in Egypt, but over the whole world, in magnificence and invention, by leaving monuments so worthy of them. These monuments, which are so ancient, that the learned are at a loss to fix the period of their erection, still brave the ravages of time, and will remain for ages. I say nothing of the maritime towns of the kingdom of Egypt, such as Damietta, Rosetta, and Alexandria, where so many nations traffic for various kinds of grain and stuffs, and a thousand other things for the comfort and pleasure of mankind. I speak of it from knowing the place; I spent some years of my youth there, which I shall ever esteem the happiest of my life.'

"My uncles had nothing to say in reply to my father, and agreed to all he had said about the Nile, Cairo, and the whole of the kingdom of Egypt. As for me, my imagination was so filled with it, that I could not sleep all night. A short time after, my uncles also evinced how much they had been struck with my father's discourse. They all proposed to him to travel together into Egypt; he accepted the proposal, and as they were rich merchants, they resolved to take with them such goods as they might dispose of with profit. I heard of their preparations for the journey, and I went to my father to entreat him, with tears in my eyes, to permit me to accompany them, and to allow me a stock of merchandise to sell on my own account. 'You are too young,' said he, 'to undertake such a journey; the fatigue would be too much for you; besides which, I am persuaded you would be a loser by your bargain.' This speech did not diminish my desire of travelling; I engaged my uncles to

intercede for me with my father, and they at length obtained his permission, that I should go as far as Damascus, where they would leave me, whilst they continued their journey into Egypt. 'The city of Damascus,' said my father, 'has many beauties; and he must be satisfied that I give him leave to go thus far.' However strong my inclination was to see Egypt after the accounts I heard, I was obliged to relinquish the thought, for he was my father, and I submitted to his will.

"I set off from Moussoul with my father and my uncles. We traversed Mesopotamia, crossed the Euphrates, and arrived at Aleppo, where we remained a few days, and from thence proceeded to Damascus, the first appearance of which agreeably surprised me. We all lodged in the same khan. I here saw a large and well-fortified city, populous, and inhabited by civilized people. We passed some days in visiting the delightful gardens which adorn the suburbs, and we agreed that what was said of Damascus was true, that it was in the midst of Paradise. After staying some time, my uncles began to think of proceeding on their journey, having first taken care to dispose of my merchandise, which they did so advantageously, that I gained a considerable sum, the possession of which gave me much delight.

"My father and my uncles left me at Damascus, and continued their journey. After their departure, I was very careful not to spend my money in useless things. I, however, hired a magnificent house; it was built entirely of marble, and ornamented with paintings, and there was a garden attached, in which were some very fine fountains. I furnished it, not indeed so expensively as the magnificence of the place required, but at least sufficiently so for a young man of my condition. It had formerly belonged to one of the principal grandees of the city, named Modoun Abdalraham, and it was then the property of a rich jeweller, to whom I paid only two *schérifs* (about ten shillings) a month for the use of it. I had a numerous retinue of servants, and lived well. I sometimes invited my acquaintance to dine with me, and occasionally partook of entertainments at their houses. Thus I passed my time at Damascus, without any passion to disturb my repose, and with the society of agreeable people for my only pleasure and occupation.

"One day, when I was sitting at the door of my house, enjoying the fresh air, a lady very well dressed, and of a good figure, came towards me, and asked me if I did not sell stuffs, and saying this walked into my house. When I saw she was gone in, I got up and shut the door, and ushered her into a room, where I entreated her to be seated. 'Madam,' said I, 'I had some stuffs which were worthy of being shown to you, but I have not any at present, for which I am extremely sorry.' She took off the veil which concealed her face, and discovered to my eyes a countenance, the beauty of which made me experience sensations to which I had till then been a stranger. 'I do not want any stuffs,' replied she; 'I come to see you, and to pass the evening in your company, if you do not disapprove it; I only require a slight collation.'

"Delighted with my good fortune, I immediately gave orders for my people to bring us several kinds of fruit, and some bottles of wine. We were quickly served, and we ate, and drank, and regaled ourselves till midnight; in short, I had never passed a night so agreeably before. The next morning I was going to put ten *schérifs* into her hand, but she withdrew it quickly, and said, 'I did not come to see you from interested motives; you wound my delicacy. Far from receiving money from you, I insist on your accepting some from me, otherwise I will never see you more;' at the same time she took ten *schérifs* out of her purse, and forced me to accept them. 'Expect me in three days,' said she, 'after the sun is set.' She then took her leave, and I felt that she carried away my heart with her.



"At the expiration of the three days, she did not fail to return, and I received her with the joy of a man who impatiently expected one dear to him. We passed the evening and night as we had the former one, and the next day when she left me, she again promised to return in three days, but would not depart till she had obliged me as before to take ten scherifs.

"Having returned the third time, and being both heated with wine, she said to me, 'My dear love, what do you think of me? Am I not handsome and pleasing?' 'Madam,' replied I, 'these questions, I think, are very useless; all the proofs of affection I give you, ought to convince you I love you; I am enchanted to see and possess you; you are my queen, my sultana; you form the sole happiness of my life.' 'Ah!' resumed she, 'I fear you would change your tone if you were to see a lady of my acquaintance, who is far younger and handsomer than I am, and who has such lively spirits, that she would make the most melancholy laugh. I must bring her to you; I have spoken to her about you, and from what I have said, she is dying with impatience to see you. She begged me to procure her this gratification, but I dared not to comply with her request till I had mentioned it to you.' 'Madam,' said I, 'you will do as you please; but say what you will about your friend, I defy all her attractions to have any power over my heart, which is so devotedly yours that nothing can ever alter my attachment.' 'Take care,' replied she, 'I warn you that I am going to put your heart to a great trial.'

"The subject was then dropped, and the following morning at her departure, instead of ten scherifs she gave me fifteen, which she obliged me to accept. 'Remember,' said she, 'that in two days you will have a new guest; prepare to give her a good reception; we will come at the usual hour after sunset.'

"I had the room decorated, and prepared an elegant collation against the day that they were to come; I waited for them with great impatience, and they at length arrived towards the close of the evening. They both unveiled, and if I had been surprised with the beauty of the first, I had much more reason to be so with that of her friend. She had regular features, and perfectly formed; a glowing complexion, and eyes of such brilliancy, that I could scarcely sustain their lustre. I thanked her for the honour she conferred on me, and entreated her to excuse me if I did not receive her in the style she deserved. 'No compliments,' said she; 'I ought to bestow them on you for having allowed me to accompany my friend hither; but as you are so good as to suffer me to remain, let us waive all ceremony, and think of nothing but amusing ourselves.'

"As I had given orders for the collation to be served as soon as the ladies arrived, we shortly sat down to table. I was opposite to my new guest, who did not cease to look and smile at me. I could not resist her winning glances, and she made herself mistress of my heart, without any resistance. But while inspiring me with love, she felt the flame herself; and far from practising any restraint, she said a number of tender things to me.

"The other lady, who observed us, at first only laughed. 'I told you,' said she, addressing herself to me, 'that you would be charmed with my friend, and I perceive you have already violated the oath you made me to remain constant.' 'Madam,' replied I, laughing as she had done, 'you would have reason to complain if I were remiss in politeness towards a lady whom you love, and have done me the honour to bring here; both of you would reproach me with not knowing how to perform the honours of my house.'

"We continued drinking, but in proportion as we became heated with wine, the new lady and I exchanged glances with so little precaution, that her friend began to conceive a violent jealousy, of which she soon gave us a fatal proof. She got up and went out, saying that she should soon return; but

a few minutes after the lady who had remained with me, changed countenance; she fell into strong convulsions, and shortly after expired in my arms, whilst I was calling my servants to assist me in relieving her. I went out immediately, and inquired for the other lady; my people told me that she had opened the street door, and had gone away. I then began to suspect, and nothing could be more just than my suspicions, that she had occasioned the death of her friend. In fact, she had had the address and wickedness to put a strong poison into the last cup, which she herself had presented to her.

"I was extremely afflicted at this accident. 'What shall I do?' said I to myself. 'What will become of me?' As I considered that I had no time to lose, I ordered my people to raise up by the light of the moon, and as quietly as possible, one of the largest pieces of marble, with which the court of my house was paved, and to dig a grave, in which they interred the body of the young lady. After the marble was replaced, I put on a travelling dress, and taking all the money I was possessed of, I locked up everything, even the door of my house, on which I put my own seal. I went to the jeweller, who was the proprietor, paid him what rent I was in his debt, and a year in advance besides, and giving him the key, begged him to keep it for me. 'A very important affair,' said I, 'obliges me to be absent for some time; I am under the necessity of going to visit my uncles at Cairo.' I then took my leave of him, instantly mounted my horse, and set off with my people who were waiting for me.

"I had a good journey, and arrived at Cairo without any unpleasant interruption. I found my uncles, who were astonished to see me. I said to them by way of excuse, that I was tired of waiting for them, and that, receiving no intelligence of them, my uneasiness had induced me to undertake the journey. They received me very kindly, and promised to intercede with my father, so that he should not be displeased at my quitting Damascus without his permission. I lodged in the same khan with them, and saw everything that was worthy of attention in Cairo.

"As they had sold all their merchandise, they talked of returning to Mous-soul, and were already beginning to make preparations for their departure; but as I had not seen all that I wished in Egypt, I left my uncles and went to lodge in a quarter very distant from their Khan, and did not make my appearance till they had set off. They sought me for a considerable time, but not being able to find me, they supposed that, touched with remorse at coming to Egypt against the will of my father, I had returned to Damascus without acquainting them, and they left Cairo in the hopes of meeting me there, where I could join them and return home."

"I remained at Cairo after their departure, and lived there three years to gratify my curiosity in examining the wonders of Egypt. During that time I took care to send my rent to the jeweller, always desiring him to keep my house for me, as it was my intention to return to Damascus, and reside there for some years. I did not meet with any adventure at Cairo worthy of being related, but you will be much surprised to hear what befel me on my return to Damascus.

"When I arrived in this city, I dismounted at the jeweller's, who received me with joy, and would accompany me to my house, to show me that no one had been in it during my absence. In fact, the seal was still entire on the lock. I entered, and found everything in the state I had left it.

"In cleaning and sweeping the room, where I had regaled the two ladies, one of my servants found a gold necklace in the form of a chain, in which, from space to space, were ten pearls very large and perfect. He brought it me, and I knew it to be that which I had seen on the neck of the young lady who was

poisoned. I supposed that it had got loose, and had fallen without my perceiving it. I could not look at it without shedding tears, as it brought to my recollection the amiable creature whom I had seen expire in such a cruel manner. I wrapped it up and put it carefully in my bosom.

"I passed some days in recovering from the fatigue of my journey, after which I began to visit those with whom I had been formerly acquainted. I gave myself up to all kinds of pleasure, and insensibly spent all my money. Reduced to this situation, instead of selling my goods, I resolved to dispose of the necklace; but I was so little acquainted with the value of pearls, that I had but bad success, as you will hear.

"I went to the bezestein, where I called aside one of the criers, and showing him the necklace, told him I wished to sell it, and begged him to show it to the principal jewellers. The crier was surprised at seeing such an elegant ornament. 'Ah, what a beautiful thing!' cried he, after having admired it for some time. 'Our merchants have never seen anything so rich and costly; I shall give them great pleasure, and you need not doubt their setting a high price on it, and bidding against one another.' He led me into a shop, which I found to be that of the owner of my house. 'Wait for me here,' said the crier, 'I shall soon return, and bring you an answer.'

"Whilst he with great secrecy was going about to the different merchants to show the necklace, I seated myself near the jeweller, who was very glad to see me, and we entered into conversation together on various subjects. The crier returned, and taking me aside, instead of telling me that the necklace was esteemed worth two thousand scherifs at the least, he assured me that no one would give me more than fifty. 'They tell me,' added he, 'that the pearls are false; determine whether you will let it go at that price.' As I believed what he said, and was in want of money, 'Go,' said I, 'I depend on what you say, and those who are better acquainted with these matters than I am; deliver it, and bring me the money directly.'

"The crier had, in fact, been sent to offer me fifty scherifs by one of the richest jewellers in the bezestein, who had only mentioned this price to sound me, and see if I knew the worth of what I wanted to sell. No sooner therefore was he made acquainted with my answer, than he took the crier with him to an officer of the police, to whom, showing the necklace, he said, 'Sir, this is a necklace that has been stolen from me, and the thief, disguised as a merchant, has had the effrontery to offer it for sale, and is now actually in the bezestein. He is content to receive fifty scherifs for jewels that are worth two thousand: nothing can be a stronger proof of his being a thief.'

"The officer of the police sent immediately to arrest me, and when I appeared before him, he asked me if the necklace he had in his hand was not that which I had offered for sale in the bezestein; I replied in the affirmative. 'And is it true,' continued he, 'that you would dispose of it for fifty scherifs?' I confessed it was. 'Well, then,' said he, in a sneering tone, 'let him have the bastinado, he will soon tell us, in his fine merchant's dress, that he is nothing better than a rank thief, let him be beaten till he owns it.' The violence of the blows made me tell a lie; I confessed, contrary to truth, that I had stolen the necklace, and immediately the officer of police ordered my hand to be cut off.

"This occasioned a great noise in the bezestein, and I was scarcely returned to my house when the owner of it came to me. 'My son,' said he, 'you seem to be a young man so prudent and well educated, how is it possible that you should have committed an action so unworthy of yourself as that which I have just heard related? You told me the amount of your property, and I doubt not it was what you said. Why did not you ask me for money? I would

willingly have lent you some, but after what has passed I cannot allow you to remain any longer in my house; resolve what you will do, for you must seek another lodging.' I was extremely mortified at these words, and entreated the jeweller, with tears in my eyes, to suffer me to stay in his house three days longer, which he granted.

"'Alas,' cried I, 'what a misfortune! What an affront! How can I venture to return to Moussoul? All that I can say to my father will never persuade him that I am innocent.' Three days after this accident befel me, I saw, with the utmost astonishment, a number of the attendants of the police officer come into my house, attended by my landlord and the merchant, who had falsely accused me of having stolen the necklace from him. I asked them what they wanted, but instead of replying, they bound me with cords, and poured forth the most abusive language, telling me that the necklace belonged to the governor of Damascus, who had lost it about three years before; and that at the same time one of his daughters had disappeared. Judge of the state I was in at this intelligence; I however determined how to act. 'I will tell the truth,' thought I; 'the governor shall decide whether he will pardon me or commit me for execution.'

"When I was conducted before him, I observed that he looked on me with an eye of compassion, which I conceived to be a favourable omen. He ordered me to be unbound, and then addressing the merchant, who was my accuser, and the landlord of my house, 'Is that,' said he to them, 'the young man who offered for sale the pearl necklace?' They immediately answered that I was, when he added, 'I am convinced that he did not steal the necklace, and I am very much surprised that such injustice should have been practised on him.' Encouraged by this speech, 'My lord,' I cried, 'I swear to you that I am innocent. I am persuaded also, that the necklace did not ever belong to my accuser, whom I never saw before, and whose horrible perfidy is the cause of the disagreeable treatment I have met with. It is true that I confessed the theft, but I made this avowal against my conscience, urged by the torments I was made to suffer, and for a reason which I am ready to relate, if you will have the goodness to listen to me.' 'I know enough already,' replied the governor, 'to be able to render you immediately part of the justice which is your due. Let the false accuser be taken from hence,' continued he, 'and let him undergo the same punishment which he caused to be inflicted on this young man, whose innocence is well known to me.'

"The order of the governor was instantly put in execution. The merchant was led out and punished as he deserved. After which the governor having desired all who were present to withdraw, thus addressed me: 'My son, relate to me, without fear, in what manner this necklace fell into your hands, and disguise nothing from me.' I then discovered to him all that had happened, and owned that I preferred passing for a thief to revealing this tragical adventure. 'Great God!' exclaimed the governor, as soon as I had done speaking, 'thy judgments are incomprehensible; and we must submit without murmuring: I receive with submission the blow which thou hast been pleased to strike.' Then addressing himself to me, 'My son,' added he, 'having heard the account of your misfortune, for which I am extremely sorry, I will now relate mine. Know, then, that I am the father of the two ladies of whom you have been speaking.'

"The first lady, who had the effrontery to seek you, even in your own house, was the eldest of all my daughters. I had married her at Cairo, to her cousin, the son of my brother. Her husband died, and she returned here, corrupted by a thousand vices, which she had learnt in Egypt. Before her arrival, the youngest, who died in so deplorable a manner in your arms, was very

prudent, and had never given me any reason to complain of her morals. Her eldest sister formed a very close friendship with her, and by insensible degrees rendered her as wicked as herself.

"The day following that on which the youngest died, as I did not see her when I sat down to table, I inquired for her of the eldest, who had returned home, but instead of making any reply, she began to weep so bitterly, that I conceived an unlucky presage. I pressed her to inform me of what I wished to know."

"Father," replied she, sobbing, "I can tell you nothing more than that my sister yesterday put on her best dress, and her beautiful pearl necklace, and went out, since which she has not appeared." I had my daughter searched for over the city, but could learn no tidings of her unhappy fate. In the mean time my eldest daughter, who no doubt began to repent of her jealous fit, did not cease weeping and bewailing the death of her sister: she even deprived herself of all kinds of nourishment, and by that means put a period to her existence.

"This, alas!" continued the governor, "is the condition of man. These are the evils to which he is exposed. But, my son, as we are both equally unfortunate, let us unite our sorrows and never abandon each other. I will bestow my third daughter on you in marriage: she is younger than her sisters, and does not at all resemble them in her conduct. She is even more beautiful than they were, and I can assure you that she is of a disposition to make you happy. My house shall be your home, and after my death you and she will be my only heirs." "My lord," said I, "I am quite confused by your kindness, and shall never be able to testify my gratitude." "Enough," interrupted he, "let us not waste time in useless conversation." Saying this, he had some witnesses called, and I married his daughter without any farther ceremony.

"He was not satisfied with punishing the merchant who had falsely accused me, he also confiscated all his property, which was very considerable, to my use. In short, as you come now from the governor, you may have observed in what high estimation he holds me. I must add too, that a man, who was sent expressly by my uncles, to seek me in Egypt, having discovered, in passing through this city, that I resided here, yesterday gave me letters from them. They inform me of the death of my father, and invite me to go to Moussoul to take possession of his inheritance; but as my alliance and friendship with the governor attach me to him, and do not suffer me to think of quitting him, I have sent back the express, empowering my uncles legally to transfer all that belongs to me. After what you have heard, I trust you will pardon me the incivility I have been guilty of during my illness, of presenting you my left hand instead of my right."

"This," said the Jewish physician to the sultan of Casgar, "is what the young man of Moussoul related to me. I remained at Damascus as long as the governor lived; after his death, as I was in the prime of my life, I had the curiosity to travel. I traversed all Persia, and went into India; at last I came to establish myself in your capital, where I exercise, with credit to myself, the profession of physician."

The sultan of Casgar thought this story entertaining. "I confess," said he to the Jew, "what thou hast been relating is extraordinary; but to speak frankly, the story of the hunchback is still more so, and much more comical; so do not flatter thyself with the hope of being reprieved any more than the others; I shall have you all four hanged." "A moment's grace, sire!" cried the tailor, advancing and prostrating himself at the feet of the sultan. "since your majesty likes pleasant stories, that which I shall tell you, will not, I think, displease you." "I will listen to thee also," replied the sultan, "but do not entertain

any hopes that I shall suffer thee to live, unless thou canst recount some adventure more diverting than that of the hunchback." The tailor, then, as if he had been sure of his business, boldly began his recital in these words.

THE STORY TOLD BY THE TAILOR.

A TRADESMAN, sire, of this city did me the honour two days since of inviting me to an entertainment which he gave yesterday morning to his friends: I repaired to his house at an early hour, and found about twenty people assembled.

We were waiting for the master of the house, who was gone out on some sudden business, when we saw him arrive, accompanied by a young stranger, very neatly dressed, and of a good figure, but lame. We all rose, and to do honour to the master of the house, we begged the young man to sit with us on the sofa. He was just going to sit down, when, perceiving a barber, who was one of the company, he abruptly stepped back, and was going away. The master of the house, surprised at this, stopped him. "Where are you going?" said he; "I bring you here to do me the honour of being present at an entertainment I am going to give my friends, and you are scarcely entered before you want to go away!" "In the name of God, sir," replied the stranger, "I entreat you not to detain me, but suffer me to depart. I cannot behold without horror that abominable barber who is sitting there; although he is born in a country where the complexion of the people is white, yet he bears the colour of an Ethiopian; but his mind is of a still deeper and more horrible dye than his visage.

We were all very much surprised at this speech, and began to conceive a very bad opinion of the barber, without knowing whether the young stranger had any just reason for speaking of him in such terms. We even went so far as to declare that we would not suffer at our table a man of whom we had heard so shocking a character. The master of the house begged the stranger to acquaint us with the occasion of his hatred to the barber. "Gentlemen," said the young man, "you must know that this barber was the cause of my being lame, and also of the most cruel affair which befel me, that you can possibly conceive; for this reason I have made a vow to quit instantly any place where he may be; and even not to reside in any town where he lives: for this reason I left Bagdad, where he was, and undertook so long a journey to come and settle myself in this city, where, being in the centre of Great Tartary, I flattered myself I should be secure of never beholding him again. However, contrary to my hopes and expectations, I find him here; this obliges me, gentlemen, to deprive myself of the honour of partaking of your feast. I will this day leave your city, and go to hide myself, if I can, in some place where he can never again offend my sight." In saying this, he was going to leave us, but the master of the house still detained him, and entreated him to relate to us the cause of the aversion he had against the barber, who all this time kept his eyes fixed on the ground, and was silent. We joined our entreaties to those of the master of the house, and at last the young man, yielding to our wishes, seated himself on the sofa, and began his history in these words, having first turned his back towards the barber, lest he should see him:—

"My father, who lived in Bagdad, was of a rank to aspire to the highest offices of state, but he preferred leading a quiet and tranquil life to all the honours he might deserve. I was his only child, and when he died I had completed my education, and was of an age to dispose of the large possessions he

had bequeathed me. I did not dissipate them in folly, but made such use of them as procured me the esteem of every one.

"I had not yet felt any tender passion, and far from being at all sensible to love, I will confess, perhaps to my shame, that I carefully avoided the society of women. One day, as I was walking in a street, I saw a great number of ladies coming towards me; in order to avoid them, I turned into a little street that was before me, and sat down on a bench that was placed near a door. I was opposite to a window where there was a number of very fine flowers, and my eyes were fixed on them, when the window opened, and a lady appeared, whose beauty dazzled me. She cast her eyes on me, and watering the flowers with a hand whiter than alabaster, she looked at me with a smile, which inspired me with as much love for her as I had hitherto felt aversion towards the rest of her sex. After having watered her flowers and bestowed on me another look full of charms, which completed the conquest of my heart, she shut the window, and left me in a state of pain and uncertainty which I cannot describe.

"I should have remained thus a considerable time, had not the noise I heard in the street brought me to my senses again. I turned my head as I got up, and saw that it was one of the first cadis of the city, mounted on a mule, and accompanied by five or six of his people: he alighted at the door of the house where the young lady had opened the window, and went in, which made me suppose he was her father.

"I returned home in a state very different from that in which I had left it; agitated by a passion so much the more violent from its being the first attack. I went to bed with a raging fever, which caused great affliction in my household. My relations, who loved me, alarmed by my sudden indisposition, came quickly to see me, and importuned me to acquaint them of the cause, but I was very careful to keep it secret. My silence increased their alarms, nor could the physicians dissipate their fears for my safety, because they knew nothing of my disease, which was only increased by the medicines they administered.

"My relations began to despair of my life, when an old lady of their acquaintance being informed of my illness, arrived; she considered me with a great deal of attention, and after she had thoroughly examined me, she discovered, I know not by what token, the cause of my disorder. She took them aside, and begged them to leave her alone with me, and to order my people to retire.

"The room being cleared, she seated herself near my pillow. 'My son,' said she, 'you have hitherto persisted in concealing the cause of your illness: nor do I require you to confess it: I have sufficient experience to penetrate into this secret, and I am sure you will not disown what I am going to declare. It is love which occasions your indisposition. I can probably assist your cure, provided you will tell me who is the happy lady that has been able to wound a heart so insensible as yours: for you have the reputation of not liking the ladies, and I have not been the last to perceive it; however, what I foresaw is at last come to pass, and I shall be delighted if I can be of any service in releasing you from your pain.'

"The old lady having finished this speech, waited to hear my answer; but although it had made a strong impression on me, I did not dare open my heart to her. I only turned towards her and uttered a deep sigh, without saying a word. 'Is it shame,' continued she, 'that prevents you from speaking, or is it want of confidence in my power to relieve you? Can you doubt the effects of my promise? I could mention to you an infinite number of young people of your acquaintance who have endured the same pain that you do, and for whom I have obtained consolation.'

"In short, the good lady said so many things to me, that at length I broke silence, and declared to her the cause of my pain. I acquainted her with the place where I had seen the object that had given birth to it, and related all the circumstances of the adventure. 'If you succeed,' continued I, 'and procure me the happiness of seeing this enchanting beauty, and of expressing to her the passion with which I burn, you may rely on my gratitude.' 'My son,' replied the old lady, 'I know the person you mention; she is, as you justly suppose, the daughter of the principal *cadi* in this city. I am not surprised that you should love her; she is the most beautiful, as well as most amiable lady in Bagdad; but what grieves me is, she is very haughty and difficult of access. You know that many of our officers of justice are very exact in making women observe the harsh laws which subject them to so irksome a restraint; they are still more strict in their own families, and the *cadi* you saw is himself alone more rigid on this point than all the others put together. As they are continually preaching to their daughters the enormity of the crime of showing themselves to men, the poor things are in general so cautious of being guilty of it, that when necessity obliges them to walk in the streets, they make no use of their eyes but to guide them on their way; I do not say that this is absolutely the case with the daughter of the principal *cadi*, yet I am much afraid of having as great obstacles to overcome on her side as on her father's. Would to Heaven you loved any other lady! I should not have so many difficulties as I foresee to surmount. I will nevertheless employ all my address, but it will require time to succeed. At any rate, take courage, and place confidence in me.'

"The old lady left me, and as I reflected with anxiety on all the obstacles she had represented to me, the fear that she would not succeed possessed me, and increased my disease. She returned the following day, and I soon read in her countenance that she had no favourable intelligence to announce. She said, 'My son, I was not mistaken; I have more to surmount than merely the vigilance of a father; you love an insensible object, who delights in letting those burn with unrequited passion who suffer themselves to be charmed with her beauty; she will not allow them the least relief; she listened to me with pleasure whilst I talked to her only of the pain she made you suffer, but no sooner did I open my mouth to persuade her to allow you an interview, than she cast an angry look at me, and said, 'You are very insolent to attempt to make such a proposition; and I desire you will never see me more, if it be only to hold such conversations as this.'

"'But let not that afflict you,' continued the old lady; 'I am not easily discouraged, and provided you do not lose your patience, I hope at last to accomplish my design.' Not to protract my narration (said the young man), I will only say that this good messenger made several fruitless attempts in my favour with the haughty enemy of my peace. The vexation I endured increased my disorder to such a degree, that the physicians gave me over. I was therefore considered as a man who was at the point of death, when the old lady came to give me new life.

"That no one might hear her, she whispered in my ear, 'Think of the present you will make me for the good news I bring you.' These words produced a wonderful effect; I raised myself in my bed, and replied with transport, 'The present will not be deficient; what have you to tell me?' 'My dear sir,' resumed she, 'you will not die this time, and I shall soon have the pleasure of seeing you in perfect health, and well satisfied with me; yesterday being Monday, I went to the lady you are in love with, and found her in very good humour; I at first put on a mournful countenance, uttered an abundance of sighs, and shed some tears. 'My good mother,' said she, 'what is

the matter? Why are you in such affliction?' 'Alas! my dear and honourable lady,' replied I, 'I am just come from the young gentleman I spoke to you of the other day; it is all over with him; he is at the point of death, and all for love of you; it is a great pity, I assure you, and you are very cruel.' 'I do not know,' said she, 'why you should accuse me of being the cause of his death: how can I have contributed to his illness?' 'How?' replied I, 'did I not tell you that he seated himself before your window just as you opened it to water your flowers? He beheld this prodigy of beauty—these charms which your mirror reflects every day; from that moment he has languished for you, and his disease is so augmented, that he is now reduced to the pitiable state I have had the honour of describing to you. You may remember, madam,' continued I, 'how rigorously you treated me lately when I was going to tell you of his illness, and propose to you a method of relieving him from his dangerous condition: I returned to him after I left you, and he no sooner perceived from my countenance that I did not bring a favourable account, than his malady redoubled its violence. From that time, madam, he has been in the most imminent danger of death, and I do not know whether you could now save his life even if you were inclined to take pity on him.'

" 'This was what I said to her,' added the old lady. 'The fear of your death staggered her, and I saw her face change colour. 'Is what you say to me quite true,' said she; 'and does his illness proceed only from his love of me?' 'Ah, madam,' replied I, 'it is but too true, would to Heaven it were false!' 'And do you really think,' resumed she, 'that the hope of seeing and speaking to me could contribute to diminish the peril of his situation?' 'It very likely may,' said I; 'and if you desire me, I will try this remedy.' 'Well, then,' replied she, sighing, 'let him hope that he may see me, but he must not expect any other favours, unless he aspires to marry me, and my father gives his consent!' 'Madam,' said I, 'you are very good; I will go directly to this young gentleman, and announce to him that he will have the pleasure of seeing and conversing with you.' 'I do not know,' said she, 'that I can fix a more convenient time to do him this favour than on Friday next during the midday prayer. Let him observe when my father goes out to attend at the mosque; and then let him come immediately before this house, if he is well enough to go abroad. I shall see him arrive from my window, and will come down to let him in. We will converse together while prayers last, and he can retire before my father returns.'

" 'This is Tuesday,' continued the old lady, 'between this and Friday you will be sufficiently recovered to encounter this interview.' Whilst the good lady was talking, I felt my disorder diminish, or rather by the time she concluded her discourse, I found myself quite recovered. 'Take this,' said I, giving her my purse, which was quite full, 'to you alone I owe my cure; I think this money better employed, than all I have given to the physicians, who have done nothing but torment me during my illness.'

"The lady having left me, I found myself sufficiently strong to get up. My relations, delighted to see me so much better, congratulated me on my recovery, and took their leave.

"Friday morning being arrived, the old lady came whilst I was dressing, and making choice of the handsomest dress my wardrobe contained. 'I do not ask you,' said she, 'how you find yourself; the occupation you are engaged in sufficiently convinces me of what I am to think; but will not you bathe before you go to the principal *cadi's*?' 'That would take up too much time,' replied I; 'I shall content myself with sending for a barber to shave my head and beard' I then ordered one of my slaves to seek one who was expert in his business, as well as expeditious.

"The slave brought me this unlucky barber, who is here present. After having saluted me, he said, 'Sir, by your countenance you seem to be unwell.' I replied that I was recovering from a very severe illness. 'I wish God may preserve you from all kinds of evils,' continued he, 'and may his grace accompany you everywhere.' 'I hope he will grant this wish,' said I, 'for which I am much obliged to you.' 'As you are now recovering from illness,' resumed he, 'I pray God that he will preserve you in health. Now tell me, what is your pleasure; I have brought my razors and my lancets; do you wish me to shave, or to bleed you?' 'Did I not tell you,' returned I, 'that I am recovering from illness? You may suppose then that I did not send for you to bleed me. Be quick and shave me, and do not lose time in talking, for I am in a hurry, and have an appointment precisely at noon.'

"The barber employed a great deal of time in undoing his apparatus, and preparing his razors; and then, instead of putting water into his basin, he drew out of his case an *astrolabe*, went out of my room, and walked into the middle of the court with a *sedate* step, to take the height of the sun. He returned with the same gravity, and on entering the chamber, 'You will, no doubt, be glad to learn, sir,' said he, 'that this Friday is the eighteenth day of the moon of Safar, in the year six hundred and fifty-three (the year of the Hegira, an epoch from which all the Mahometans reckon) since the retreat of our great prophet from Mecca to Medina, and in the year seven thousand three hundred and twenty of the epoch of the great Iskander with the two horns; and that the conjunction of Mars and Mercury signifies that you cannot choose a better time than the present day and present hour to be shaved. But on the other side, this conjunction forms a bad presage for you. It demonstrates to me, that you this day will encounter a great danger: not indeed of losing your life, but of an inconvenience which will remain with you all your days; you ought to be obliged to me for advertising you to be careful of this misfortune; I should be sorry that it befel you.'

"Judge, gentlemen, of my vexation, of having fallen in the way of this chattering and ridiculous barber: what a mortifying delay for a lover, who was preparing for a tender meeting with his mistress! I was quite exasperated. 'I care very little,' said I angrily, 'either for your advice or your predictions: I did not send for you to consult you on astrology; you came here to shave me; therefore either perform your office, or take yourself away, that I may send for another barber.'

"'Sir,' replied he, in a tone so phlegmatic, that I could scarcely contain myself, 'what reason have you to be angry? Do not you know that all barbers are not like me, and that you would not find another such, even if you had him made on purpose. You only asked for a barber, and in my person are united the best barber of Bagdad, an experienced physician, a profound chemist, a never-failing astrologer, a finished grammarian, a perfect rhetorician, a subtle logician; a mathematician, thoroughly accomplished in geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and in all the refinements of algebra; an historian who is acquainted with the history of all the kingdoms in the universe. Besides these sciences, I am well instructed in all the points of philosophy; and have my memory well stored with all our laws and all our traditions. I am a poet, an architect; but what am I not? There is nothing in nature concealed from me. Your late honoured father, to whom I pay a tribute of tears every time I think of him, was fully convinced of my merit. He loved me, caressed me, and never ceased quoting me in all companies, as the first man in the whole world. My gratitude and friendship for him attaches me to you; and urges me to take you under my protection, and insure you from all the misfortunes with which the planets may threaten you.'

"At this speech, notwithstanding my anger, I could not help laughing. 'When do you mean to have done, impertinent chatterer,' cried I, 'and when do you intend to begin shaving me?'"

"'Sir,' replied the barber, 'you do me an injury by calling me a chatterer: every one, on the contrary, bestows on me the honourable appellation of silent. I had six brothers whom you might with some reason have termed chatterers, and that you may be acquainted with them, the eldest was named Bacbouc, the second Bakbarah, the third Bakbac, the fourth Alcouz, the fifth Alnaschar, and the sixth Schacabac. These were indeed most tiresome talkers, but I, who am the youngest of the family, am very grave and concise in my discourses.'"

"Place yourselves in my situation, gentlemen; what could I do with so cruel a tormentor? 'Give him three pieces of gold,' said I to the slave who overlooked the expenses of my house, 'and send him away, that I may be at peace; I will not be shaved to-day.' 'Sir!' cried the barber at hearing this, 'what am I to understand, sir, by these words? It was not I who came to seek you; it was you who ordered me to come; and that being the case, I swear by the faith of a Mussulman, that I will not quit your house till I have shaved you. If you do not know my worth, it is no fault of mine; your late honoured father was more just to my merits. Every time, when he sent for me to bleed him he used to make me sit down by his side, and then it was delightful to hear the clever things I entertained him with. I kept him in continual admiration; I enchanted him; and when I had done, 'Ah,' he would exclaim, 'you are an inexhaustible fund of science; no one can approach the profoundness of your knowledge.' 'My dear sir,' I used to reply, 'you do me more honour than I deserve. If I say a good thing, I am indebted to you for the favourable hearing you are so good as to grant me: it is your liberality that inspires me with those sublime ideas, which have the good fortune to meet your approbation.' One day, when he was quite charmed with an admirable discourse I had just concluded, 'Give him,' cried he, 'an hundred pieces of gold, and put him on one of my richest robes!' I received this present immediately; and at the same instant I drew out his horoscope, which I found to be one of the most fortunate in the world. I carried the proofs of my gratefulness still farther, for I cupped him instead of bleeding him with a lancet."

"He did not stop here; he began another speech which lasted a full half hour. Fatigued with hearing him, and vexed at finding the time pass without my getting forward, I knew not what more to say, 'No, indeed,' at length I exclaimed, 'it is not possible that there should exist in the whole world a man who takes a greater delight in enraging people.'"

"I then thought I might succeed better by gentle means. 'In the name of God,' I said to him, 'leave off your fine speeches, and finish with me quickly: I have an affair of the greatest importance, which obliges me to go out, as I have already told you.' At these words he began to laugh. 'It would be very praiseworthy,' said he, 'if our minds were always wise and prudent; however, I am willing to believe, that when you put yourself in a passion with me, it was your late illness which occasioned this change in your temper; on this account, therefore, you are in need of some instructions, and you cannot do better than follow the example of your father and your grandfather: they used to come and consult me in all their affairs; and I may safely say without vanity, that they were always the better for my advice. Let me tell you, sir, that a man scarcely ever succeeds in any enterprise, if he has not recourse to the opinions of enlightened persons: no man becomes clever, says the proverb, unless he consults a clever man. I am entirely at your service, and you have only to command me.'"

"'Cannot I then persuade you,' interrupted I, 'to desist from these long speeches, which tend to no purpose but to distract my head, and prevent me

from keeping my appointment: shave me directly, or leave my house.' In saying this I arose, and angrily struck my foot against the ground.

"When he saw that I was really exasperated with him, 'Sir,' said he, 'do not be angry; we are going to begin directly.' In fact, he washed my head, and began to shave me; but he had not made four strokes with his razor when he stopped to say, 'Sir, you are hasty; you should abstain from these gusts of passion, which only come from the devil. Besides which, I deserve that you should have some respect for me on account of my age, my knowledge, and my striking virtues.'

"Go on shaving me,' said I, interrupting him again, 'and speak no more.' 'That is to say,' replied he, 'that you have some pressing affair on your hands; I'll lay a wager that I am not mistaken.' 'Why, I told you so two hours ago,' returned I; 'you ought to have shaved me long since.' 'Moderate your ardour,' replied he; perhaps you have not considered well of what you are going to do; when one does anything precipitately, it is almost always a source of repentance. I wish you would tell me what this affair is, that you are in such haste about; and I will give you my opinion on it; you have plenty of time, for you are not expected till noon, and it will not be noon these three hours.' 'That is nothing to me,' said I; 'people of honour, who keep their word, are always before the time appointed. But I perceive that in reasoning thus with you, I am imitating the faults of chattering barbers; finish shaving me quickly.'

"The more anxious I was for despatch, the less so was he to obey me. He left his razor to take up his astrolabe; and when he put down his astrolabe he took up his razor.

"He got his astrolabe the second time, and left me half shaved to go and see what o'clock it was precisely. He returned. 'Sir,' said he, 'I was certain I was not mistaken; it wants three hours to noon, I am well assured, or all the rules of astronomy are false.' 'Gracious heaven!' cried I, 'my patience is exhausted, I can hold out no longer. Cursed barber, ill-omened barber, I can hardly refrain from falling upon thee, and strangling thee.' 'Softly, sir,' said he coolly, and without showing any emotion and anger, 'you seem to have no fear of bringing on your illness again; do not be so passionate, and you shall be shaved in a moment.' Saying this, he put the astrolabe in his case, took his razor, which he sharpened on the strop, that was fastened to his girdle, and began to shave me; but whilst he was shaving me he could not help talking. 'If you would, sir,' said he, 'inform me what this affair is, that will engage you at noon, I would give you some advice, which you might find serviceable.' To satisfy him I told him that some friends expected me at noon to regale me, and rejoice with me on my recovery.

"No sooner had the barber heard me mention a feast, than he exclaimed, 'God bless you on this day as well as on every other; you bring to my mind, that yesterday I invited four or five friends to come and regale with me to-day; I had forgotten it, and have not made any preparations for them.' 'Let not that embarrass you,' said I; 'although I am going out, my table is always well supplied, and I make you a present of all that is intended for it to-day; I will also give you as much wine as you want, for I have some most excellent in my cellar; but then you must be quick in finishing to shave me; and remember that instead of making you presents to hear you talk, as my father did, I give them to you to be silent.'

"He was not content to rely on my word. 'May God recompense you,' cried he, 'for the favour you do me; but show me directly these provisions, that I may judge if there will be enough to regale my friends handsomely; for I wish them to be satisfied with the good cheer I shall give them.' 'Have,' said I, 'a lamb, six capons, a dozen of fowls, and sufficient for four courses.' I

gave orders to a slave to produce all that, together with four large jugs of wine. 'This is well,' replied the barber, 'but we shall want some fruit, and something for sauce to the meat.' I desired what he wanted to be given him. He left off shaving me to examine each thing separately, and as this examination took up nearly half an hour, I stamped and swore; but I might amuse myself as I pleased, the rascal did not hurry a bit the more. At length, however, he again took up the razor and shaved for a few minutes, then stopping suddenly, 'I should never have supposed, sir,' said he, 'that you had been of so liberal a turn; I begin to discover that your late father, of honoured memory, lives a second time in you; certainly I did not deserve the favours you heap on me, and I assure you that I shall retain an eternal sense of the obligation; for, sir, that you may know it in future, I will tell you that I have nothing but what I get from generous people like yourself, in which I resemble Zantout, who rubs people at the bath, and Sali, who sells little burnt peas about the streets, and Salouz, who sells beans, and Akerscha, who sells herbs, and Abou Mekares, who waters the streets to lay the dust, and Cassem, who belongs to the caliph's guard: all these people give no reception to melancholy; they are neither sorrowful nor quarrelsome; better satisfied with their fortune than the caliph himself in the midst of his court, they are always gay and ready to dance and sing, and they have each their peculiar dance and song, with which they entertain the whole city of Bagdad; but what I esteem the most in them is, that they are none of them great talkers any more than your slave, who has the honour of speaking to you. Here, sir, I will give you the song and the dance of Zantout, who rubs the people at the bath; look at me, and you will see an exact imitation.'

'The barber sung the song and danced the dance of Zantout; and notwithstanding all I could say to make him cease his buffoonery, he would not stop till he had imitated in the same way all those he had mentioned. After that, 'Sir,' said he, 'I am going to invite all these good people to my house, and if you will take my advice, you will be of our party, and leave your friends, who are perhaps great talkers, and will only disturb you by their tiresome conversations, and will make you relapse into an illness still worse than that from which you are just recovered; instead of which, at my house you will only enjoy pleasure.'

'Notwithstanding my anger, I could not avoid laughing at his folly. 'I wish,' said I, 'that I had no other engagement, and I would gladly accept your proposal; I would with all my heart make one of your jolly set, but I must entreat you to excuse me, I am too much engaged to-day; I shall be more at liberty another day, and we will have this party: finish shaving me, and hasten to return, for perhaps your friends are already arrived.' 'Sir,' replied he, 'do not refuse me the favour I ask of you. Come and amuse yourself with the good company I shall have, if you had once been with such people, you would have been so pleased with them that you would give up your friends for them.' 'Say no more about it,' said I; 'I cannot be present at your feast.'

'I gained nothing by gentleness. 'Since you will not come with me,' replied the barber, 'you must allow me, then, to accompany you. I will go home with the provisions you have given me; my friends shall eat of them if they like, and I will return immediately. I cannot commit such an incivility as to suffer you to go alone—you deserve this piece of complaisance on my part.' 'Good Heaven,' exclaimed I, on hearing this, 'am I then condemned to bear this whole day so tormenting a creature! In the name of the great God,' said I to him, 'finish your tiresome speeches; go to your friends, eat and drink, and entertain yourselves, and leave me at liberty to go to mine. I will go alone, and do not want any one to accompany me; and indeed if you must know the truth, the place where I am going is not one in which you can be received—I

only can be admitted.' 'You are joking, sir,' replied he; 'if your friends have invited you to an entertainment, what reason can prevent me from accompanying you? You will give them great pleasure, I am sure, by taking with you a man like me, who has the art of entertaining a company and making them merry. Say what you will, sir, I am resolved to go in spite of you.'

"These words, gentlemen, threw me into the greatest embarrassment. 'How can I possibly contrive to get rid of this infernal barber,' thought I to myself. 'If I continue obstinately to contradict him, our contest will never be finished.' I had already waited till they had called the people to noon prayers for the first time; and as it was now almost the moment to set out, I determined therefore not to answer him a single word, and to appear as if I agreed to everything he said. He finished shaving me, and he had no sooner done than I said to him, 'Take some of my people with you to carry these provisions home; then return here, I will wait, and not go without you.'

"He then went out, and I finished dressing myself as quickly as possible. I only waited till they called to prayers for the last time, when I hastened to commence my expedition; but this malicious barber, who seemed aware of my intention, was satisfied with accompanying my people only within sight of his own house, and seeing them go in. He afterwards concealed himself at the corner of the street, to observe and follow me. In short, when I got to the door of the *cadi*, I turned round and perceived him at the end of the street. This sight put me into the greatest rage.

"The *cadi*'s door was half open, and when I went in I saw the old lady who was waiting for me, and who, as soon as she had shut the door, conducted me to the apartment of the young lady, with whom I was so much in love. But I had hardly begun to enter into any conversation with her before we heard a great noise in the street. The young lady ran to the window, and looking through the blinds, perceived that it was the *cadi*, her father, who was already returning from prayers. I looked out at the same time, and saw the barber seated exactly opposite, and on the same bench from whence I had beheld the lady the first time.

"I had now two subjects for alarm, the arrival of the *cadi*, and the presence of the barber. The young lady dissipated my fears on the first, by telling me that her father very rarely came up into her apartment; but as she had foreseen that such an interruption might take place, she had prepared the means for my escape in case of necessity; but the indiscretion of that unlucky barber caused me great uneasiness, and you will soon perceive that this disquietude was not without foundation.

"As soon as the *cadi* was returned home, he himself inflicted the bastinado on a slave who had deserved it. The slave uttered loud cries, which were distinguishable even in the street. The barber thought I was the person whom they were treating ill, and that these were my cries. Fully persuaded of this, he began to call out as loud as he could, to tear his clothes, throw dust upon his head, and call for help to all the neighbours who ran out to him. They inquired what was the matter, and what assistance they could give him. 'Alas!' cried he, 'they are assassinating my master, my dear lord;' and without saying another word, he ran to my house, crying out in the same way, and returned, followed by all my servants armed with sticks. They knocked furiously at the door of the *cadi*, who sent a slave to know what the noise was about; but the slave, quite terrified, returned to his master, 'My lord,' said he, 'above ten thousand men will come into your house by force, and are already beginning to break open the door.'

"The *cadi* ran himself to the door and inquired what they wanted. His venerable appearance did not inspire my people with any respect, and they

insolently addressed him, 'Cursed cadi! thou dog! for what reason art thou going to murder our master? What has he done to thee?' 'My good people,' replied the cadi, 'why should I murder your master, whom I do not know, and who has never offended me? My door is open, you may come in and search my house.' 'You have given him the bastinado,' said the barber; 'I heard his cries not a minute ago.' 'But,' replied the cadi, 'as I said before, in what can your master have offended me, that I should ill-treat him thus? Is he in my house? and if he is, how could he get in, or who could have introduced him?' 'Thou wilt not make me believe thee with thy great beard, thou wicked cadi,' resumed the barber; 'I know what I say. Your daughter loves our master, and appointed a meeting in your house during the mid-day prayers; you no doubt received information of it, and returned quickly; you surprised him here, and ordered your slaves to give him the bastinado; but this wicked action shall not remain unpunished: the caliph shall be informed of it, and will execute a severe and speedy sentence on you. Give him his liberty, and let him come out directly, otherwise we will go in and take him from you to your shame.' 'There is no occasion to say so much about it,' said the cadi, 'nor to make such a bustle; if what you say is true, you have only to go in and search for him—I give you full permission.' The cadi had scarcely spoken these words when the barber and my people burst into the house, like a set of furious madmen, and began to seek for me in every corner.

"As I heard everything the barber said to the cadi, I endeavoured to find out some place to conceal myself in. I was unable to discover any other than a large empty chest, into which I immediately got, and shut the lid down upon me. After the barber had searched every other place, he did not fail coming into the apartment where I was. He went directly to the chest, and opened it; and as soon as he perceived that I was in it, he took it up and carried it away upon his head. He descended from the top of the staircase, which was very high, into a court, through which he quickly passed, and at last reached the street-door.

"As he was carrying me along the street, the lid of the chest unfortunately opened: I had not resolution enough to bear the shame and disgrace of being thus exposed to the populace who followed us; I jumped down, therefore, into the street in such a hurry that I hurt myself violently, and have been lame ever since. I did not at first perceive the full extent of my misfortune; I therefore made haste to get up, and run away from the people who were laughing at me. At the same time I scattered a handful or two of gold and silver, with which I had filled my purse, and while they were stopping to pick it up, I made my escape by passing through several private streets. But the cursed barber, taking advantage of the trick which I had made use of to get rid of the crowd, followed me so closely, that he never once lost sight of me; and all the time he continued calling aloud, 'Stop, sir, why do you run so fast? You know not how much I have felt for you on account of the ill-usage you have received from the cadi; and well I might, as you have been so generous to me and my friends, and we are under such obligations to you. Did I not truly inform you that you would endanger your life through your obstinacy, in not suffering me to accompany you? All this has happened to you through your own fault; and I know not what would have become of you if I had not obstinately determined to follow you, and observe which way you went. Where then, my lord, are you running? Pray wait for me.'

"It was in this manner that the unlucky barber kept calling out to me all through the street. He was not satisfied with having scandalized me so completely in the quarter of the town where the cadi resided, but seemed to wish

that the whole city should become acquainted with my disgrace. This put me into such a rage that I could have stopped and strangled him, but that would only have increased my destruction. I therefore went another way to work. As I perceived that, by his calling out, the eyes of every one were attracted towards me, some looking out of their windows, and others stopping in the street to stare at me, I went into a khan, the master of which was known to me. I found him indeed at the door, where the noise and uproar had brought him. 'In the name of God,' I cried, 'do me the favour to prevent that mad fellow from following me in here.' He not only promised me to do so, but he kept his word, although it was not without great difficulty: for the obstinate barber attempted to force an entrance in spite of him. Nor did he retire before he uttered a thousand abusive words: and he continued to tell every one he met, till he reached his own house, the very great service he pretended to have done me.

"It was thus that I got rid of this tiresome man. The master of the khan then entreated me to give him an account of my adventure. I did so; after which I asked him in my turn to let me have an apartment in his house till I was quite cured. 'You will be much better accommodated, sir,' he said, 'in your own house.' 'I do not wish to return there,' I answered, 'for that detestable barber will not fail to find me out; I shall then be pestered with him every day, and it would absolutely kill me with vexation to have him constantly before my eyes. Besides, after what has happened to me this day, I am determined not to remain any longer in this city. I will wander wherever my ill stars may direct me.' In short, as soon as I was cured, I took as much money as I thought would be sufficient for my journey, and gave the remainder of my fortune to my relations.

"I then set out from Bagdad, gentlemen, and arrived here. I had every reason, at least, to hope that I should not have met with this mischievous barber in a country so distant from my own; and I now discover him in your company. Be not therefore surprised at my anxiety and eagerness to retire. You may judge of the painful sensations the sight of this man causes me, through whose means I became lame, and was reduced to the necessity of giving up my relations, my friends, and my country."

Having made his speech, the lame young man got up and went out. The master of the house conducted him to the door, assuring him that it gave him great pain to have been the cause, though innocently, of so great a mortification.

When the young man was gone (continued the tailor), we still remained very much astonished at his history. We cast our eyes towards the barber, and told him that he had done wrong—if what we had just heard was true. "Gentlemen," answered he, raising his head, which he had till now kept towards the ground, "the silence which I have imposed upon myself while this young man was telling you his story ought to prove to you that he has advanced nothing that was not the fact; notwithstanding, however, all that he has told you, I still maintain that I ought to have done what I did, and I leave you yourselves to judge of it. Was he not thrown into a situation of great danger, and without my assistance, would he so fortunately have escaped from it? He may, indeed, think himself very happy to have got free from it with only a lame leg. Was I not exposed to a much greater danger, in order to get him from a house where I thought he was so ill-treated? Has he, then, reason to complain of me, and to attack me with so many injurious reproaches? You see what we get by serving ungrateful people. He accuses me of being a chatterer; it is mere calumny. Of seven brothers, of whom our family consists,

I am the very one who speaks least, and yet who possesses the most wit. In order to convince you of it, gentlemen, I have only to relate their history and my own to you. I entreat you to favour me with your attention."

THE HISTORY OF THE BARBER.

DURING the reign of the caliph Mostanser Billah, a prince so famous for his great liberality towards the poor, there were ten robbers, who very much infested the roads in the neighbourhood of Bagdad, and were for a long time guilty of great depredations and horrible cruelties. The caliph having been informed of this great outrage, ordered the judge of the police, some days before the feast of Bairam, to come to him, and commanded him, under pain of death, to bring them all ten before him. The judge of the police was very active, and sent out so many of his men into the country that the ten robbers were taken on the very day of the feast. I happened to be walking at that time on the banks of the Tigris, where I observed ten very well-dressed men, who embarked on board a boat. I should have known they were robbers if I had paid any attention to the guard who accompanied them; but I observed only the robbers themselves, and thinking that they were men who were going to enjoy themselves and pass this day in festivity, I got into the boat at the same time with them, without saying a word, in hopes that they would suffer me to accompany them. We rowed down the Tigris, and they made us land at the caliph's palace. By this time I had an opportunity of recollecting myself, and perceiving that I had formed a wrong opinion of my companions. When we got out of the boat, we were surrounded by a fresh party of the guards belonging to the judge of the police, who bound us, and carried us before the caliph. I suffered myself to be bound like the rest, still without saying a word; for what use would it have been to me either to have remonstrated or to have made any resistance? It would only have been the cause of my being ill-treated by the guards, who would have paid no attention to me, for they are brutes, who will not hear reason. I was in fact with the robbers, and that was quite enough for them to believe that I really was one.

As soon as we were come before the caliph, he ordered these ten rascals to be punished. "Strike off," said he, "the heads of these ten robbers." The executioner immediately ranged us in a line, within reach of his arm, and fortunately I was the very last. He then, beginning with the first, struck off the heads of the ten robbers; but when he came to me he stopped. The caliph, observing that the executioner did not cut off my head, called out in anger, "Have I not ordered thee to cut off the heads of the ten robbers? Why then hast thou cut off only nine?" "Commander of the Faithful," replied the executioner, "God forbid that I should not execute your majesty's orders. You may see here ten bodies on the ground, and as many heads, which I have cut off." He then counted them. When the caliph himself saw that the executioner was right, he looked at me with astonishment, and finding that I did not possess the countenance of a robber. "My good old man," said he, "by what accident were you found among these wretches, who deserved a thousand deaths?" "Commander of the Faithful," I replied, "I will tell you the absolute truth. I this morning saw these ten persons, whose punishment is an illustrious proof of your majesty's justice, get into a boat; being fully persuaded that they were people who were going to enjoy themselves in a party, to celebrate this day, which is the most distinguished of our religion, I embarked with them."

The caliph could not help laughing at my adventure, and quite contrary to

the lame young man, who treated me as a babbler, he admired my discretion and power of keeping silence. "Commander of the Faithful," said I to him, "let not your majesty be astonished if I hold my tongue upon an occasion when another person would have been most anxious to have spoken. I make it my particular study to practise silence, and it is from the possession of this virtue that I have acquired the glorious title of the silent man. I am called thus, in order to distinguish me from six brothers of mine. It is an art which my philosophy has taught me; in short, this virtue is the cause of all my glory and my happiness." "I heartily rejoice," answered the caliph, smiling, "that they have bestowed a title upon you, of which you make so excellent a use. But inform me what sort of men your brothers were. Did they at all resemble you?" "Not in the least," I answered; "they were every one chatters, and in person there was the greatest difference between us. The first was hunchbacked, the second was toothless, the third was quite blind, the fourth had but one eye, the fifth had his ears cut off, the sixth was hare-lipped. The various adventures which happened to them would enable your majesty to judge of their characters, if I might have the honour to relate them." As I thought the caliph wished for nothing better than to hear them, I went on, without waiting for his answer.

THE STORY OF THE BARBER'S FIRST BROTHER.

My eldest brother, sire, who was called Bacbouc the hunchback, was a tailor by trade. As soon as his apprenticeship was finished, he hired a shop, which happened to be opposite a mill; and as he had not yet got a great deal of business, he found some difficulty in getting a livelihood. The miller, on the contrary, was very comfortably off, and had also a very beautiful wife. As my brother was one morning working in his shop, he happened to look up, and perceived the window of the mill open, and the miller's wife looking into the street. He thought her so very handsome that he was quite enchanted with her; she, however, paid not the least attention to him, but shut the window, and did not make her appearance any more that day.

In the mean time the poor tailor did nothing but lift up his head, and kept looking towards the mill all the time he was at work. The consequence was, that he pricked his fingers very often, and his work was not that day so neat and regular as usual. When the evening came, and he was forced to shut up his shop, he had hardly resolution to set about it, because he still hoped he should again see the miller's wife. It was, however, at length absolutely necessary for him to shut it up, and retire to his small house, where he passed a very bad night. The next morning he got up very early, and ran to his shop, so impatient was he to behold his mistress. But he was not more fortunate than the day before, for the miller's wife looked out only for one instant during the whole day. That instant, however, was quite sufficient to render him the most amorous of men. On the third he had indeed more reason to be satisfied, for the miller's wife, accidentally cast her eyes upon him, and actually surprised him attentively surveying her. This readily informed her of what passed in his bosom.

She had no sooner thus got acquainted with his sentiments, than she resolved, instead of being angry or vexed at it, to amuse herself with my brother. She looked at him with a smiling air, which he returned in the same manner, but so humorously that she was obliged to shut the window as quick as possible, for fear her loud fits of laughter should make him suppose she was turning him into ridicule. Bacbouc was so innocent, that he interpreted this conduct

in his own favour, and flattered himself that she had looked upon him with pleasure.

The miller's wife then resolved to gratify her inclination for humour at my brother's expense. She happened to have a piece of handsome stuff, which she had for a long time intended to have made into a dress. She wrapped it up, therefore, in a beautiful handkerchief, embroidered with silk, and sent it to the tailor by a young female slave of hers. This slave, being instructed for the purpose, came to his shop, and said, "My mistress sends her salutations to you, and desires you to make a dress out of this piece of stuff that I have brought, according to the pattern that is along with it. She very often alters her dress, and you will be very well pleased with her custom." My brother did not for a moment doubt but that the miller's wife was in love with him. He thought that she had given him this employment so soon after what had passed between them, only to show that she was well acquainted with the state of his heart, and to assure him of the progress he had made in her affections. Impressed with this good opinion of himself, he desired the slave to tell her mistress that he would put aside every other business for hers, and that the dress should be ready by the next morning. He worked, in short, with so much diligence and assiduity, that the dress was finished that very day.

The next morning the young slave came to see if the dress was finished. Bachouc immediately gave it her, neatly folded up, and said, "I have too great an interest to oblige your mistress, to neglect her dress; and I wish by my diligence to persuade her to employ no one else but myself." The slave then walked a few steps, as if she was going away; but suddenly turning back, she said in a low voice to my brother, "I had nearly forgotten, by the bye, to execute one of my commissions. My mistress charged me to make her compliments to you, and to ask you how you had passed the night; as for her, she, poor lady, is so much in love with you that she has not slept a wink." "Tell her," answered my poor simpleton of a brother, in a transport, "that my passion for her is so violent, I have not closed my eyes these four nights." After this kind speech from the miller's wife, he flattered himself she would not let him languish a long time in expectation only of her favours.

The slave had not left my brother above a quarter of an hour before he saw her return with a piece of satin. "My mistress," said she, "is quite satisfied with her dress, which fits her as well as possible; but as it is very handsome, and she is desirous of wearing it only with a new pair of drawers, she entreats you to make her a pair as soon as possible, out of this piece of satin." "It is sufficient," answered Bachouc; "it shall be done before I leave my shop to-day, and you have only to come and fetch it in the evening." The miller's wife showed herself very often to my brother from the window, and was prodigal of her charms, in order to encourage him to work. It was quite a treat to see him stitching. The drawers were soon made, and the slave came to take them; but she brought the tailor no money, either for what he had laid out in the trimmings for both the dress and the drawers, or to pay him for making of either. In the mean time this unfortunate lover, who thus diverted them without knowing he was made a fool of, had eaten nothing the whole of that day, and was obliged to borrow some money to purchase a supper.

The day following, as soon as he was come to his shop, the young slave came to him, and told him the miller wished to speak to him. "My mistress," added she, "has shown him your work, and has said so much in your favour, that he also wants you to work for him. She has acted thus, because she wishes that the intercourse and connection which thus will be formed between you and him should be a means of enabling you both to succeed in what you so much desire." My brother was easily persuaded of this, and went with the slave to

the mill. The miller gave him a good reception, and showing him a piece of cloth, "I have occasion," said he, "for some shirts, and wish you to make me twenty out of this piece of cloth; if there be any remain, you will bring it back."

My brother was obliged to work for five or six days before he finished the twenty shirts for the miller, who immediately after gave him another piece of cloth, to make him as many pair of drawers. When they were finished, Bacbouc carried them to the miller, who asked him what was his demand for his trouble. My brother, upon this, said that he should be satisfied with twenty drachms of silver. The miller immediately called the young slave, and ordered her to bring the scales, to see if the money he was going to pay was weight. The slave, who knew her part, looked at my brother angrily, to make him understand that he would spoil everything if he received the money. He understood her very well, and therefore refused to take any of the silver, although he was so much in want of it that he had been obliged to borrow some, in order to purchase the thread with which he had made the shirts and the drawers. When he left the miller, he came directly to me, and entreated me to lend him a trifle to buy some food, telling me that his customers did not pay him. I gave him some copper money which I had in my purse, upon which he lived for some days. It is true he ate only broth, nor even of that did he ever get a sufficient meal.

My brother one day went into the miller's, who was busy about his mill, and thinking my brother might come to ask for his money he offered it him; but the young slave, who was present, again, by signs to him, prevented his accepting any, and made him tell the miller, in answer, that he did not come on that account, but only to inquire after his health. The miller thanked him for his kindness, and gave him an outside robe to make. Bacbouc brought it home the next day, when the miller took out his purse; but the young slave coming in at that moment, looked at my brother, who then said to the miller, "There is no hurry, neighbour, we will settle the business another time." Thus the poor dupe returned to his shop with three great evils; he was in love, he was hungry, and he was penniless.

The miller's wife was both avaricious and wicked. She was not satisfied with preventing my brother from receiving what was due to him, but she excited her husband to revenge himself for the love which the tailor professed for her. The means which they took were the following:—The miller invited Bacbouc one evening to supper, and after having treated him with but indifferent fare, he thus addressed him: "It is too late, brother, for you to return home; you had much better therefore sleep here." After having thus spoken, he showed him a place where there was a bed, and having left him there, he returned, and went with his wife to the room where they were accustomed to sleep. In the middle of the night the miller came back to my brother; he called out to him, "Are you asleep, neighbour? My mule is taken suddenly ill, and I have a great deal of corn to grind; you will therefore do me a very great favour if you will turn the mill in his place." To prove to him that he was a man willing to oblige him, he answered that he was ready to render him this service if he would only show him how he was to set about it. The miller then fastened him by the middle of his body, like a mule, to make him turn the mill; and immediately giving him a good cut upon the loins with the whip, "Get on, neighbour," he cried. "Why do you strike me?" answered my brother. "It is only to encourage you," replied the miller; "for without that my mule will not stir a step." Bacbouc was astonished at this treatment; nevertheless, he durst not complain of it. When he had gone five or six rounds, he wished to rest himself; but the miller immediately gave him a

dozen sharp cuts with the whip, calling out, "Courage, neighbour; don't stop, I entreat you; you must go on without taking breath, otherwise, you will spoil my flour."

The miller thus obliged my brother to turn the mill during the rest of the night, and as soon as daylight appeared, he went away without unfastening him, and returned to his wife's chamber. Bacbouc remained some time in this situation; at last the young slave came, who untied him. "Alas! how my good mistress and myself have pitied you!" cried the cunning slave; "we are not at all to blame for what you have suffered; we have had no share in the wicked trick which her husband has played you." The unfortunate Bacbouc answered not a word, so much was he fatigued and bruised with the beating. He got, however, back to his own house, and firmly resolved to think no more of the miller's wife. The recital of this history, continued the barber, made the caliph laugh. "Go," said he to me; "return home; they shall give you something by my order, to console you for having lost the festivities which you expected." "Commander of the Faithful," replied I, "I entreat your majesty not to think of giving me anything till I have related the histories of my other brothers." The caliph having shown by his silence that he was disposed to listen to me, I continued as follows.

THE HISTORY OF THE BARBER'S SECOND BROTHER.

My second brother, who was called Bakbarah, the toothless, walking one day through the city, met an old woman in a retired street. She thus accosted him:—"I have," said she, "a word to say to you if you will stay a moment." He immediately stopped, and asked her what she wished." "If you have time to go with me," she replied, "I will carry you to a most magnificent palace, where you shall see a lady more beautiful than the day. She will receive you with a great deal of pleasure; and will treat you with a collation and excellent wine. I have no occasion, I believe, to say any more." "But is what you tell me," replied my brother, "true?" "I am not given to lying," replied the old woman; "I propose nothing to you but what is the fact. You must, however, pay attention to what I require of you. You must be prudent, speak little, and you must comply with everything." Bakbarah having agreed to the conditions, she walked on before, and he followed her. They arrived at the gate of a large palace, where there were a great number of officers and servants. Some of them wished to stop my brother, but the old woman no sooner spoke to them, than they let him pass. She then turned to my brother and said, "Remember, that the young lady, to whose house I have brought you, is fond of mildness and modesty, nor does she like being contradicted. If you satisfy her in this, there is no doubt you will obtain from her whatever you wish." Bakbarah thanked her for this advice, and promised to profit by it.

She then carried him into a very beautiful apartment, which formed part of a square building. It corresponded with the magnificence of the palace: there was a gallery all round it, and in the midst of it was a very fine garden. The old woman made him sit down on a sofa, that was handsomely furnished, and desired him to wait there a moment, till she went to inform the young lady of his arrival.

As my brother had never before been in so superb a place, he immediately began to observe all the beautiful things that were in sight; and judging of his good fortune by the magnificence he beheld, he could hardly contain his joy. He almost immediately heard a great noise, which came from a long troop of slaves who were enjoying themselves, and came towards him, bursting out at

the same time into violent fits of laughter. In the midst of them he perceived a young lady of most extraordinary beauty, whom he easily discovered to be their mistress, by the attention they paid her. Bakbarah, who expected merely a private conversation with the lady, was very much surprised at the arrival of so large a company. In the mean time the slaves, putting on a serious air, approached him; and when the young lady was near the sofa, my brother, who had risen up, made a most profound reverence. She took the seat of honour, and then, having requested him to resume his, she said to him in a smiling manner, "I am delighted to see you, and wish you everything you can yourself desire." "Madam," replied Bakbarah, "I cannot wish a greater honour than that of appearing before you." "You seem to me," she replied, "of so good-humoured a disposition, that we shall pass our time very agreeably together."

She immediately ordered a collation to be served up, and they covered the table with baskets of various fruits and sweetmeats. She then sat down at the table, along with my brother, and the slaves. As it happened that he was placed directly opposite to her, as soon as he opened his mouth to eat, she observed he had no teeth; she remarked this to her slaves, and they all laughed immoderately at it. Bakbarah, who from time to time raised his head to look at the lady, and saw that she was laughing, imagined it was from the pleasure she felt at being in his company, and flattered himself, therefore, that she would soon order the slaves to retire, and that he should enjoy her conversation in private. The lady easily guessed his thoughts, and took a pleasure in continuing a delusion which seemed so agreeable to him: she said a thousand soft, tender things, and presented the best of everything to him with her own hand.

When the collation was finished, she arose from table; ten slaves instantly took some musical instruments, and began to play and sing, the others to dance. In order to make himself the more agreeable, my brother also began dancing, and the young lady herself partook of the amusement. After they had danced for some time, they all sat down to take breath. The lady ordered them to bring her a glass of wine, then cast a smile at my brother, to intimate that she was going to drink his health. He instantly rose up, and stood while she drank. As soon as she had finished, instead of returning the glass, she had it filled again, and presented it to my brother, that he might pledge her.

Bakbarah took the glass, and in receiving it from the young lady, he kissed her hand, then drank to her, standing the whole time, to show his gratitude for the favour she had done him. After this the young lady made him sit down by her side, and began to give him signs of affection. She put her arm round his neck, and frequently gave him gentle pats with her hand. Delighted with these favours, he thought himself the happiest man in the world; he also was tempted to begin to play in the same manner with this charming creature; but he durst not take this liberty before the slaves, who had their eyes upon him, and who continued to laugh at this trifling. The young lady still kept giving him such gentle taps, till at last she began to apply them so forcibly, that he grew angry at it. He reddened, and got up to sit further from so rude a play-fellow. At this moment the old woman, who had brought my brother there, looked at him in such a way as to make him understand that he was wrong, and had forgotten the advice she had before given him. He acknowledged his fault, and to repair it, he again approached the young lady, pretending that he had not gone to a distance through anger. She then took hold of him by the arm, and drew him towards her, making him again sit down close by her, and continuing to bestow a thousand pretended caresses on him. Her slaves, whose only aim was to divert her, began to take a part in the sport. One of them gave poor Bakbarah a fillip on the nose with all her strength; another pulled

his ears almost off, while the rest kept giving him slaps, which passed the limits of raillery and fun.

My brother bore all this with the most exemplary patience: he even affected an air of gaiety, and looked at the old woman with a forced smile. "You were right," said he, "when you said that I should find a very fine, agreeable, and charming young lady. How much am I obliged to you for it!" "Oh, this is nothing yet," replied the old woman; let her alone, and you will see very different things by-and-by." The young lady then spoke. "You are a brave man," said she, to my brother, "and I am delighted at finding in you so much kindness and complaisance towards all my little fooleries, and that you possess a disposition so conformable to mine." "Madam," replied Bakbarah, ravished with this speech, "I am no longer myself, but am entirely at your disposal; you have full power to do with me as you please." "You afford me the greatest delight," added the lady, "by showing so much submission to my inclination. I am perfectly satisfied with you, and I wish that you should be equally so with me. Bring," cried she to the attendants, "perfumes and rose-water." At these words two slaves went out and instantly returned, one with a silver vase, in which there was exquisite aloe-wood, with which she perfumed him, and the other with rose-water, which she sprinkled over his face and hands. My brother could not contain himself for joy at seeing himself so handsomely and honourably treated.

When this ceremony was finished, the young lady commanded the slaves who had before sung and played, to recommence their concert. They obeyed; and while this was going on, the lady called another slave, and ordered her to take my brother with her, saying, "You know what to do; and when you have finished, return with him to me." Bakbarah, who heard this order given, immediately got up, and going towards the old woman, who had also risen to accompany the slave, he requested her to tell him what they wished him to do. "Our mistress," replied she, in a whisper, "is extremely curious; and she wishes to see how you would look disguised as a female; this slave, therefore, has orders to take you with her, to paint your eyebrows, shave your mustachios, and dress you like a woman." "You may paint my eyebrows," said my brother, "as much as you please; to that I readily agree, because I can wash them again; but as to shaving me, that, mind you, I will by no means suffer. How do you think I dare appear without my mustachios?" "Take care," answered the woman, "how you oppose anything that is required of you. You will quite spoil your fortune, which is going on as prosperously as possible. She loves you and wishes to make you happy. Will you, for the sake of a paltry mustachio, forego the most delicious favours any man can possibly enjoy?"

Bakbarah at length yielded to the old woman's arguments; and without saying another word, he suffered the slave to conduct him to an apartment, where they painted his eyebrows red. They shaved his mustachios, and were absolutely going to shave his beard. But the easiness of my brother's temper did not carry him quite so far as to suffer that. "Not a single stroke," he exclaimed, "shall you take at my beard." The slave represented to him that it was of no use to have cut off his mustachios, if he would not also agree to lose his beard; that a hairy countenance did not at all coincide with the dress of a woman; and that she was astonished that a man, who was on the very point of possessing the most beautiful woman in Bagdad, should care for his beard. The old woman also joined with the slave, and added fresh reasons; she threatened my brother with being quite in disgrace with her mistress. In short, she said so much, that he at last permitted them to do what they wished.

As soon as they had dressed him like a woman, they brought him back to the young lady, who burst into so violent a fit of laughter at the sight of him,

that she fell down on the sofa, on which she was sitting. The slaves all began to clap their hands, so that my brother was put quite out of countenance. The young lady then got up, and continuing to laugh all the time, said, "After the complaisance you have shown to me, I should be guilty of a crime not to bestow my whole heart upon you; but it is necessary that you should do one thing more for love of me; it is only to dance before me as you are." He obeyed; and the young lady and the slaves danced with him, laughing all the while as if they were crazy. After they had danced for some time, they all threw themselves upon the poor wretch, and gave him so many blows, both with their hands and feet, that he fell down almost fainting. The old woman came to his assistance, and without giving him time to be angry at such ill treatment, she whispered in his ear, "Console yourself, for you are now arrived at the conclusion of your sufferings, and are about to receive the reward for them. You have only one thing more to do," added she, "and that is a mere trifle. You must know that my mistress makes it her custom, whenever she has drunk a little, as she has done to-day, not to suffer any one she loves to come near her, unless they are stripped to their shirt. When they are in this situation, she takes advantage of a short distance, and begins running before them through the gallery, and from room to room till they have caught her. This is one of her fancies. Now, at whatever distance from you she may start, you, who are so light and active, can easily overtake her. Undress yourself therefore quickly, and remain in your shirt, and do not make any difficulty about it."

My brother had already carried his complying humour too far to stop at this. The young lady at the same time took off her robe, in order to run with greater ease, and remained only in her drawers. When they were both ready to begin the race, the lady took the advantage of about twenty paces, and then started with wonderful celerity. My brother followed her with all his strength, but not without exciting the risibility of the slaves, who kept clapping their hands all the time. The young lady, instead of losing any of the advantage she had first taken, kept continually gaining ground of my brother. She ran round the gallery two or three times, then turned off down a long dark passage, where she saved herself by a turn of which my brother was ignorant. Bakbarah, who kept constantly following her, lost sight of her in this passage, and he was also obliged to run much slower, because it was so dark. He at last perceived a light, towards which he made all possible haste; he went out through a door which was instantly shut upon him.

You may easily imagine what was his astonishment at finding himself in the middle of a street, inhabited by curriers. Nor were they less surprised at seeing him in his shirt, his eyebrows painted red, and without either beard or mustachios. They began to clap their hands, to hoot at him; and some even ran after him, and kept lashing him with strips of their leather. They then stopped him, and set him on an ass, which they accidentally met with, and led him through the city, exposed to the laughter and shouts of the mob.

To complete his misfortune, they led him through the street where the judge of the police lived, and this magistrate immediately sent to inquire into the cause of the uproar. The curriers informed him that they saw my brother, exactly in the state he then was, come out of the gate leading to the apartments of the women belonging to the grand vizier, which opened into their street. The judge then ordered the unfortunate Bakbarah, upon the spot, to receive a hundred strokes upon the soles of his feet, to be conducted without the city, and forbid him ever to enter it again.

This, Commander of the Faithful, said I to the caliph Mostanser Billah, is the history of my second brother, which I wished to relate to your majesty.

He knew not, poor fellow, that the ladies of our great and powerful lords amuse themselves by making such fun as this with any young man who is silly enough to trust himself in their hands.

The barber then went on without any interruption to the history of his third brother.

THE HISTORY OF THE BARBER'S THIRD BROTHER.

COMMANDER of the Faithful, my third brother, who was called Bakbac, was quite blind, and his destiny was so wretched that he was reduced to beg, and passed his life in going from door to door asking charity. He had been accustomed to walk through the streets alone for so long a time, that he had no occasion for any one to lead him. He used to knock at the different doors, and never answered till they came and opened them.

He happened one day to knock at the door of a house, the master of which was quite alone. "Who is there?" he called out. My brother made no answer, but knocked a second time. Again did the master of the house inquire who was at the door, but no one replied. He then came down, opened the door, and asked my brother what he wanted. "That you will bestow something upon me for the love of God," answered Bakbac. "You seem to me to be blind," said the master of the house. "Alas, it is true," replied my brother. "Hold out your hand," cried the other. My brother, supposing it was to receive something, immediately put his hand out; but the master of the house only took hold of it to assist him in going up stairs to his apartment. Bakbac imagined it was for the purpose of giving him some food, as had often happened to him at other houses. When they were both in the chamber, the master of the house let my brother's hand go, and sat down in his place: he then again asked him what it was he wanted. "I have already told you," replied Bakbac, "that I request a trifle of you for the love of God." "My good blind man," answered the master, "all I can do for you is to wish that God would restore your sight to you." "You might have told me that at the door," said my brother, "and spared me the difficulty of coming up stairs." "And why, good innocent man as you are," replied the other, "did you not answer me, after you had knocked the first time, and when I asked you what you wanted? What is the reason you give people the trouble of coming down to open the door, when they speak to you?" "What, then, do you mean to do for me?" said Bakbac. "I tell you again," replied the master, "that I have nothing to give you." "Help me at least to go down again, as you brought me up," said my brother. "The staircase is before you," answered he, "and if you wish it, you may go down alone." My brother then began to descend, but missing his step, about half-way down, he fell to the bottom, and bruised his head, and strained his loins very much. He got up, but not without pain, and went away muttering at and abusing the master of the house, who did nothing but laugh at his fall.

As he was going from the house, two of his companions, who were also blind, happened to pass by, and knew his voice. They stopped to ask him what success he had met with, on which he told them what had just befallen him; and added, that he had received nothing during the whole day. "I conjure you," continued he, "to accompany me home, that I may, in your presence, take some of the money, which we have in store among us, to buy something for my supper." The two blind men agreed to it, and he conducted them home.

It is necessary in this place to observe, that the man of the house in which my brother had been so ill-treated, was a thief, and by nature both cunning and malicious. He had overheard, by means of his window, what Bakbac had said to his comrades; he therefore came down stairs and followed them, and went with them, unobserved, into an old woman's house, where my brother lodged. As soon as they were seated, Bakbac said to the other two, "We must shut the door, brothers, and take care that there is no stranger among us." At these words the robber was very much embarrassed; but perceiving a rope, that hung from a beam, in the middle of the room, he took hold of it, and suspended himself in the air, while the blind men shut the door, and felt all round the room with their sticks. When this ceremony was concluded, and they were again seated, he let go the rope and sat down by the side of my brother, without making any noise. The latter thinking there was no one besides his blind companions, thus addressed them: "As you have made me, comrades, the banker for all the money we three have collected for a long time past, I wish to prove to you that I am not unworthy of the trust you have reposed in me. The last time we reckoned, you know, we had ten thousand drachms, and we put them into ten bags: I will now show you that I have not touched one of them." Having said this he put his hands among some old rags and clothes, and drew out the ten bags, one after the other, and giving them to his companions, "Here," said he, "are all the bags, and you may judge by the weight that they are quite full; or you may count them if you like it better." They answered that they were perfectly satisfied with his honesty. He then opened one of the bags, and took out ten drachms, and the other two blind men did the same.

After this my brother replaced the bags in the same spot. One of the blind men then said, there was no occasion for them to spend anything for supper that night, as he had received from the charity of some good people sufficient provisions for all three; he instantly took out of his wallet, some bread, cheese, and fruit, and put all of them upon a table. They then began to eat, and the robber, who sat on the right hand of my brother, chose the best, and eat of everything with them: but in spite of all the precaution he used to avoid making the least noise, Bakbac heard him chew, and instantly exclaimed, "We are lost; there is a stranger among us." While he was saying this, he stretched out his hand, and seized the robber by the arm. He then threw himself upon him, calling out thief! and giving him many blows with his fist. The other blind men also instantly called out, and beat the robber, who on his part defended himself as well as he could. As he was both strong and active, and had the advantage of seeing where he planted his blows, he laid about him most furiously, first on one side, and then the other, whenever he was able, and called out, "Thieves, robbers," more clamorously than his enemies.

The neighbours immediately assembled at the noise, broke open the door, and had much difficulty to separate the combatants. Having at last put an end to the fray, they inquired the cause of their disagreement. "Gentlemen," cried my brother, who had not yet let the robber go, "this man, whom I have got hold of, is a thief, who came in here with us for the purpose of robbing us of the little money we possess." The robber, who as soon as he saw the people enter, had shut his eyes, and pretended to be blind, then said, "He is a liar, gentlemen; and I swear by the name of God, and by the life of the caliph, that I am one of their companions and associates, and that they refuse to give me the share which belongs to me. They all three set themselves against me, and I demand justice." The neighbours, who did not wish to interfere with their disputes, carried them all four before the judge of the police.

When they were come before this magistrate, the robber still pretending to be

blind, without waiting till they were interrogated, said, "Since you, my lord, have been appointed to administer justice in behalf of the caliph, whose power may God prosper, I will declare to you that we are all equally culpable. But as we have pledged ourselves under an oath, not to reveal anything except we receive the bastinado, if you wish to be informed of our crime, you have only to order it to be given to us; and you may begin with me." My brother now wished to speak, but they compelled him to hold his tongue. They then began to bastinado the robber.

He had the resolution to bear twenty or thirty strokes, and then pretending to be overcome with pain, he first opened one eye, and soon after the other, calling out at the same time for mercy, and begging the judge of the police to order them to remit his punishment. At seeing the robber with both eyes open, the judge was very much astonished. "Scoundrel," he cried, "what does this strange thing mean?" "My lord," replied the robber, "I will discover a most important secret, if you will have the goodness to pardon me; and as a pledge that you will keep your word, give me the ring you have on your finger, and which you often use as a seal. I am then ready to reveal the whole mystery to you."

The judge ordered his people to stop the punishment, and promised to pardon him. "Upon the faith of this promise," replied the robber, "I now declare to you, my lord, that both my companions and myself are possessed of most excellent eye-sight. We all four feign blindness, in order to have the power of entering houses without molestation, and even penetrating into the apartments of the women, whose weakness we sometimes take advantage of. I moreover confess to you that we have collected in common, at least ten thousand drachms by this cunning trick. This morning I demanded of my companions two thousand five hundred drachms, which came to my share; but because I declared I would break off all connection with them and retire, and from fear that I should discover their artifice, they refused to give them me; on my continuing to insist upon my share, they all fell upon me, and ill-treated me in a violent manner, as I can prove by the people who have brought us before you. I wait here for you to administer justice, my lord, and that you will make them deliver up the two thousand five hundred drachms which are my due. And if you wish that my comrades should acknowledge the truth of what I advance, order them to receive three times as many blows as you have given me, and you will see them open their eyes as I did."

My brother and the other two blind men wished to convince the judge that this was an infamous imposture, but he would not hear a word. "Rascals," cried he, "is it thus then that you counterfeit blindness, and go about deceiving people, under pretence of exciting their charity, and are thus enabled to be guilty of such wicked actions?" "He is an impostor," exclaimed my brother; "it is false that we are able to see at all, and we are ready to take God to witness of it."

Whatever my brother could say was nevertheless useless; both he and his companions received two hundred strokes of the bastinado. The judge every moment expected them to open their eyes, and attributed to their great obstinacy what it was impossible for them to do. During the whole of this time the robber kept saying to the blind men, "My good fellows, open your eyes, and do not wait till you almost die under the punishment." Then addressing himself to the judge of the police, he added, "I see very well, my lord, that they will carry their obstinacy so far that they will never open their eyes; they are without doubt anxious to avoid the shame of reading their own condemnation in the countenances of those who surround them. It is better to pardon them now, and send some one with me to take the ten thousand drachms they have concealed."

The judge did not intend to neglect doing this; he therefore commanded one of his people to accompany the robber, and they brought the ten bags back with them. He then ordered two thousand five hundred drachms to be counted out and given to the robber, and kept the remainder for himself. With respect to my brother and his companions, he was satisfied with ordering them into banishment, which punishment he thought light enough. I was no sooner informed of what had happened to Bakbac, than I sought him out. He related his misfortune to me, and I brought him privately back into the city. I should have been able, I have no doubt, to have proved the innocence of my brother before the judge of the police, and to have had the robber punished as he deserved, but I dared not undertake it for fear of bringing some misfortune upon my own head.

This is the conclusion of the melancholy adventure of my third brother, who was blind. The caliph did not laugh less at this than he had done at those he had before heard. He again ordered me to receive something more, but without waiting till they had given it to me, I began the history of my fourth brother

THE HISTORY OF THE BARBER'S FOURTH BROTHER.

THE name by which my fourth brother was called was Alcouz. He lost his eye in the manner I shall have the honour to relate to your majesty. He was a butcher by trade; and as he had a particular talent in bringing up rams, and teaching them to fight, he from this circumstance acquired the friendship and knowledge of some of the principal people, who were much amused with these sorts of combats, and who even kept rams for this very purpose at their own houses. He had besides a very good business; and there was always in his shop the finest and most beautiful meat that was to be found in the market, because he was very rich, and did not spare expense in order to have the best.

As he was one day in his shop, an old man, who had a very long and white beard, came in to purchase six pounds of meat; he then paid his money and went away. My brother observed that his money was very beautiful, new, and well coined; he resolved, therefore, to lay it by in a separate part of his closet. During five months the same old man came regularly every day for the same quantity of meat, and paid for it with the same sort of money, which my brother as regularly continued to lay by.

At the end of five months, Alcouz having an inclination to make a purchase of a certain quantity of sheep, resolved to pay for them out of this particular money; he therefore went to his box, and opened it; but he was in the greatest astonishment when he discovered, instead of his money, only a parcel of leaves cut round. He immediately began to beat himself, and made so great a noise that he brought all his neighbours about him, whose surprise was as great as his own, when he informed them of what had passed. "I wish to God," cried my brother, with tears in his eyes, "that this treacherous old man would at this instant make his appearance with his hypocritical face." He had hardly spoken these words, when he saw him coming along at a distance. He ran in the greatest hurry to meet him, and having seized hold of him, "Mussulmen," he vociferated with all his force, "assist me; only listen to the shameful trick that this infamous man has played me." He then related to a large crowd of people, who had collected round him, the same story he had before done to his neighbours. When he had finished his tale, the old man, without the least emotion, quietly answered, "You would do much better to let me go, and by this action make reparation for the affront you have thus offered me before so many people,

lest I should return you the compliment in a more serious manner, which I should be sorry to do." "And what have you, pray, to say against me?" replied my brother; "I am an honest man in my business, and I fear you not." "You wish, then, that I should make it public," returned the old man in the same tone of voice. "Learn, then," added he, addressing himself to the people, "that instead of selling the flesh of sheep, as he ought to do, this man sells human flesh." "You are an impostor," cried my brother. "No, no," answered the other; "for at this very moment I am speaking, there is a man with his throat cut hanging up on the outside of your shop like a sheep. Let them go there, and we shall soon know whether I have spoken the truth."

Before my brother had opened the box where the leaves were, he had that morning killed a sheep, and had dressed and exposed it on the outside of his shop as usual. He therefore protested that what the old man had said was false; but in spite of all his protestations, the credulous mob, enraged at the idea of a man's being guilty of so shocking a crime, wished to be assured of the fact on the spot. They therefore obliged my brother to let the old man go, and laid hold of him instead, and ran like fury to his shop, where they saw a man with his throat cut, and hung up exactly as the accuser had stated: for this old man was, in fact, a magician, and had deceived the eyes of all the people, as he had formerly done my brother, when he made him take the leaves he had given him for real good money.

At sight of this, one of those who held Alcouz gave him a great blow with his fist, and at the same time said, "Is it thus then, rascal, that you make us eat human flesh?" The old man also, who had not left them, immediately gave him another blow, that knocked out one of his eyes. Every one who could get near him was equally active in beating him. Nor were they satisfied with ill-treating him in this manner: they conducted him before the judge of the police, before whom they produced the pretended carcass, which they had taken down and brought with them, as a proof of the accused person's guilt. "My lord," said the old magician to him, "you see before you a man who is so barbarous as to kill men, and sell their flesh for that of sheep. The public expect that you will punish him in an exemplary manner." The judge of the police attended to what my brother had to say with great patience; but the story of the money changed into leaves appeared so little worthy of belief, that he treated my brother as an impostor, and choosing to give credit to his own eyes, he ordered him to receive five hundred blows. After this, having obliged him to discover where his money was, he took the whole of it from him, and condemned him to perpetual banishment, after having exposed him for three successive days, mounted on a camel, to all the city.

At the time that this dreadful adventure happened to Alcouz, I was absent from Bagdad. He retired to a very obscure part, where he remained concealed till the wounds his punishment produced were healed. It was chiefly on the back that he had been so beaten. As soon as he was able to walk he travelled, during the night and through unfrequented roads, to a city where he was known to no one; there he took a lodging, from whence he hardly ever stirred. Tired, however, at last of living so reclusive a life, he one day went to walk in the suburbs of the town, when he suddenly heard a great noise of horsemen coming along behind him. He happened just at this instant to be near the door of a large house; and as he was apprehensive of everybody, after what had passed, he fancied that these horsemen were in pursuit of him in order to arrest him. He therefore opened the door for the purpose of concealing himself. After having shut it again, he went into a large court, where he had no sooner appeared than two domestics came up to him and seized him by the collar, saying, "God be praised that you have come, of your own free

will, to give yourself up.' You have disturbed us so much for these last three nights, we have been unable to sleep; and you have spared our lives only because we have prevented your wicked intention of taking them."

You may easily imagine that my brother was not a little surprised at this sort of welcome. "My good friends," said he to them, "I really know not what you wish of me; you without doubt take me for another person." "No, no," replied they; "we are not ignorant that you and your comrades are freebooters. You were not satisfied with having robbed our master of all he possessed, and reducing him to beggary, but even wished to take his life. Let us see if you have not the knife about you, which you had in your hand when we pursued you last night." Having said this, they began to search him, and perceived that he had a knife. "So so," cried they in taking it, "have you the assurance still to deny that you are a robber?" "What," then answered my brother, "cannot a man carry a knife in his pocket without being a thief? Listen to my story," added he; "and instead of having a bad opinion of me, you will even be affected at my misfortunes." So far, however, were they from listening to it, that they immediately fell upon him, trod upon him, pulled off his clothes, tore his shirt; and then observing the scars upon his back, "Ah, rascal!" they cried, redoubling their blows, "do you wish to make us believe you are an honest man, when your back is covered with scars?" "Alas!" cried my brother, "my sins must be very great, since, after having been once before so unjustly treated, I am served so a second time without being the least culpable."

The two servants paid no attention to my brother's complaints, but carried him before the judge of the police. "How dare you," said the judge, "break into people's houses, and pursue them with a knife in your hand?" "My lord," answered poor Alcouz, "I am one of the most innocent men in the world. I shall be undone, if you will not do me the favour patiently to listen to me. No person is more worthy of compassion than I am." "Sir," cried one of the domestics at this instant, "will you listen for a moment to a robber, who breaks into people's houses, pillages them, and murders the inhabitants? If you refuse to give us credit, look at his back, and that will prove enough." When he had said this, they uncovered my brother's back, and showed it to the judge, who immediately ordered him to receive upon the spot a hundred strokes, with a leathern strap, on his shoulders, without inquiring any further into the matter: he then commanded him to be led through the city upon a camel, with a crier going before him, calling out, "THIS IS THE WAY THEY PUNISH THOSE WHO FORCIBLY BREAK INTO HOUSES."

When this ceremony was over, they set him down without the town, and forbade him ever to enter it again. Some people, who accidentally met him after this second disgraceful event, informed me where he was. I directly set out to find him, and then brought him secretly to Bagdad, where I did everything, as far as I was able, to assist him.

The caliph Mostanser Billah (continued the barber) did not laugh so much at this history as at the others; for he had the goodness of heart to commiserate the unfortunate Alcouz. He then wished to give me something and send me away; but without giving them time to obey his orders, I said, "You may now have observed, most sovereign lord and master, that I speak very little. Since your majesty has had the goodness to listen to me thus far, and as you express a wish to hear the adventures of my two other brothers, I hope and trust they will not afford you less amusement than what you have already heard. You may then make a most complete history of them, which will not be unworthy of being placed among your archives."

THE HISTORY OF THE BARBER'S FIFTH BROTHER.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the name of my fifth brother was Alnaschar, who, while he lived with my father, was excessively idle: instead of working for his bread, he was not ashamed of demanding sufficient for his support every evening, and would live upon it the next day. Our father at last died at a very advanced period of life, and all he left us consisted of seven hundred drachms of silver. We divided it equally among us, and each took one hundred for his share. Alnaschar, who had never before been in possession of so much money at a time, found himself very much embarrassed with the disposal of it. He debated a long time in his own mind on this subject, and at last determined to lay it out in the purchase of glasses, bottles, and other glass articles, which he went to get at a large wholesale merchant's. He put the whole of his stock into an open basket, and fixed upon a very small shop, where he sat down with the basket before him; and, leaning his back against the wall, waited for customers to buy his merchandise.

While he was remaining in this attitude, with his eyes fixed upon his basket, he began to meditate; and in the midst of his reverie, he gave vent to the following speech sufficiently loud for a tailor, who was his neighbour, to hear him.

"This basket," said he, "cost me one hundred drachms, and that is all I am worth in the world. In selling its contents by retail, I shall do well if I make two hundred drachms: and of these two hundred, which I shall invest again in glassware, I shall make four hundred drachms. By continuing this traffic, I shall in process of time amass the sum of four thousand drachms. With these four thousand I shall easily make eight. And as soon as I am worth ten thousand, I will leave off selling glassware, and turn jeweller. I will then deal in diamonds, pearls, and all sorts of precious stones. When I shall be in possession of as much wealth as I wish, I will purchase a beautiful house, large estates, eunuchs, slaves, and horses: I will entertain handsomely and largely, and shall make some noise in the world. I will make all the musicians and dancers, both male and female, who live in the city, come to my house. Nor will I remain satisfied till I have realized, if it shall please God, one hundred thousand drachms. And when I shall become thus rich, I shall think myself equal to a prince; and I will send and demand the daughter of the grand vizier in marriage, and represent to him that I have heard most astonishing reports of the beauty, wisdom, wit, and every other good quality of his daughter: and in short, that I will bestow upon her the very night of our nuptials a thousand pieces of gold. If the vizier should be so ill bred as to refuse me his daughter, though I know that will not be the case, I will go and take her away before his face, and bring her home in spite of him.

"As soon as I shall have married the grand vizier's daughter, I will purchase ten very young and well-made black eunuchs for her. I will dress myself like a prince, and will parade through the town, mounted on a fine horse, the saddle of which shall be of pure gold, and the caparisons of gold stuff, relieved with diamonds and pearls. I will be accompanied by slaves, who shall go both before and behind me, and will thus proceed to the palace of the vizier, with the eyes of all fixed upon me, both nobles and others, who will make me the most profound reverence as I go along. When I shall have dismounted at the grand vizier's, and come to the bottom of the staircase, I will ascend between my people ranged in two rows to the right and left, and the grand vizier in receiving me for his son-in-law, shall give me his place, and seat himself before me, in order to show me the more respect. If all this should happen, two of

my men shall have a purse, each containing one thousand pieces of gold, which I had ordered them to bring. I will then take one of them, and in presenting it to the grand vizier, will say, 'Behold the thousand pieces of gold which I have promised you on the first night of my marriage.' Then offering him the other, I will add, 'This is not all; to show you that I am a man of my word, and to prove that I give you more than I promise, receive this other purse of equal value.' After such an act as this, my generosity will be the conversation of the whole world.

"I will then return home with the same pomp. My wife will send some officer to compliment me on my visit to her father. I will bestow a beautiful robe of honour on the officer, and send him back with a rich present. If in return she shall wish to make me a present, I will refuse it, and dismiss the person who brings it. I will not, moreover, permit her to leave her apartments upon any account whatever, without first consulting me; and whenever I wish to go to her, it shall always be in a way that shall impress her with the greatest respect for me. In short, no house shall be so well regulated as mine. I will always appear magnificently dressed; and whenever I wish to pass the evening with her, I will sit in the most honourable seat, where I will affect a grave and solemn air; nor will I turn my head to the right or left. I will speak but little; and while my wife, beautiful as the moon at the full, presents herself before me in all her splendour, I will pretend not to see her. Her women, who will be standing round her, will say, 'My dear lord and master, behold your spouse, the humblest of your slaves before you. She is waiting for you to caress her, and is much mortified that you do not deign to take the least notice of her. She is greatly fatigued at standing thus long before you; at least, then, give her leave to sit down.' I will not answer a word to this speech, at which their surprise and grief will be much augmented. They will then throw themselves at my feet; and after they shall have remained there a considerable time, entreating and begging of me to yield to them, I will at last lift up my head, and casting upon her a sort of negligent unmeaning glance, will then return to my former state. Thinking perhaps that my wife may not either be well or properly dressed, they will lead her back to her room, in order to change her habit; and in the mean time I will return to my apartment, and put on a more magnificent dress than I had before. They will then return a second time, will address the same speech, and I shall again have the pleasure of not looking at my wife till they shall have prayed and entreated me as long and earnestly as before. And I will thus begin, on the very first day of my marriage, to teach her how she may expect to be treated during the remainder of her life.

"After the various ceremonies of our nuptials are over," continued Alnaschar, "I will take a purse from the hands of one of the attendants, containing five hundred pieces of gold, which I will give to the female attendants, that they may leave me alone with my spouse. As soon as they shall have retired, my wife shall go to bed first. I will immediately follow her, and will be the whole night with my back turned towards her, and will not utter a single syllable. The next morning she will not fail to complain to her mother, the lady of the grand vizier, of my pride and neglect, and this will very much delight me. Her mother will then come to see me, and out of respect take and kiss my hands, and say to me, 'My lord, for she will not dare to call me son-in-law, through fear of displeasing me, by speaking with so much familiarity; I entreat you, my lord, not to despise my child in such a manner, nor keep her at such a distance; I assure you she will always endeavour to please you, and I know her whole heart is devoted to you.' Although my mother-in-law shall address me so respectfully and kindly, I will not answer her a word,



THE BARBER'S FIFTH BROTHER.

but remain as grave and solemn as ever. She will then throw herself at my feet, and after kissing them many times, will say, 'My lord, is it possible you suspect the prudence of my daughter; I assure you I have never suffered her to go out of my sight; and you are the first man who has ever seen her face. Forbear to inflict so great a mortification upon her, and do her the favour to look at, and speak to her, and thus strengthen her good intention of endeavouring to satisfy and please you in everything.'

"All this shall have no effect upon me; which my mother-in-law observing, she will then take a glass of wine, and putting it into my wife's hand, will say, 'Go and present him this glass of wine yourself; he will not, perhaps, have the cruelty to refuse it from so beautiful a hand.' My wife will then take the glass, and stand up before me, trembling all the time. When she observes that I do not incline myself towards her, and that I persist in taking not the least notice of her, she will address me, with her eyes bathed in tears, in these words: 'My heart, my dear soul, my amiable lord, I conjure you by the favours which Heaven has so plentifully bestowed upon you, to have the goodness, to take this glass of wine from the hand of the humblest of your slaves.' I shall, however, take care neither to look at, nor speak to her. 'My charming husband,' will she continue to say, redoubling her tears, and carrying the glass of wine close to my mouth, 'I will not cease entreating you till I obtain the favour of your drinking it.' At last, tired and worn out with her solicitations and prayers, I will throw a most terrible glance at her, and will give her a good blow on her cheek, at the same time pushing her so violently from me with my foot, that she shall fall down at the bottom of the sofa."

My brother was so entirely absorbed in these chimerical visions, that he represented the action with his foot, as if it were a reality, and he unfortunately struck his basket of glassware so violently, that he sent it from one end of his shop into the street, where it was all broken to pieces.

His neighbour, the tailor, who had heard the whole of his extravagant speech, burst out into a fit of laughter when he saw the basket overturned. "Oh, you cruel wretch," said he to my brother, "ought you not to expire with shame at ill-treating a young wife in such a manner, when she has given you no reason for complaint? You must be hard-hearted indeed to pay no attention to the tears, and be insensible to the charms of so amiable a lady. If I were in the place of your father-in-law, the grand vizier, I would order you a hundred strokes with a leathern strap, and send you round the city with the praise you so well merit."

This most unfortunate accident brought my brother to his senses, and knowing that it was his own insupportable pride that had caused it, he beat his breast, tore his garments, and sobbed so violently and loud, that all the neighbourhood soon assembled; and the people who were going by to midday prayers, stopped to inquire the cause of all this bustle: and as this happened to be on a Friday, there were more people than usual. Some pitied Alnaschar, others laughed at his folly. The vanity, however, which he had before possessed, was now entirely annihilated, as well as his property; and he continued weeping at his hard and cruel fate, when a lady of considerable consequence passed by, mounted on a mule very richly caparisoned. The state in which she saw my brother excited her compassion. She asked who he was, and the reason of his crying so violently. They only said that he was a poor man, who had laid out the little money he possessed in a basket of glassware, and that the basket had fallen down and all his glass was broken. The lady immediately turned to a eunuch who accompanied her, and ordered him to give my brother what money he had with him. The eunuch obeyed, and put a purse containing five hundred pieces of gold into my brother's hand. Alnaschar was ready to

expire with joy at sight of it. He bestowed a thousand blessings on the lady, and after shutting up his shop, where it was now useless for him to stay, he went home.

He made many serious reflections on the good fortune which had so unexpectedly happened to him; and while he was thus employed, he heard some person knock at his door. Before he opened it, he asked who was there, and perceiving it was a female voice, he opened it. "My son," said she, addressing my brother, "I have a favour to request of you. It is now the time for prayers, and I wish to wash myself, in order to be fit to offer them. Suffer me, I entreat you, to come into your house, and afford me a basin of water." My brother looked at her, and saw she was rather advanced in years; and although he did not know her, he nevertheless acceded to what she wished. He gave her a vessel full of water, and then resumed his seat. He was again quite absorbed with his adventure; he took his gold and put it into a sort of long and narrow purse, adapted to the purpose of carrying it at his girdle. The old woman in the mean time said her prayers; and when she had finished, she approached my brother, and prostrated herself twice at his feet, so low that her forehead touched the ground as if she was praying to God; then getting up, she wished my brother all manner of prosperity, and thanked him for his kindness.

As she was but meanly dressed, and humbled herself so much before him, he thought that she meant to ask charity; and he offered her therefore two pieces of gold. The old woman drew back with as much surprise as if my brother had done her an injury. "Good God!" cried she, "what do you mean by this? Is it possible, sir, that you can take me for one of those poor wretches who make a practice of impudently going into people's houses and demanding charity? Put back your money, for I have no necessity for it, God be praised. I belong to a young lady in this city of most incomparable beauty, and so rich that she does not let me want for anything."

My brother was not cunning enough to perceive the address of the old woman, who refused the two pieces of gold only to dupe him the more. He asked her if she could not procure him the honour of seeing this lady. "Certainly," answered she, "and you may even easily be able to marry her; and in becoming master of her person you will get possession of all her fortune; take your money and follow me." Delighted with having so unexpectedly received such a large sum of money, and of finding almost immediately after a beautiful and rich wife, he lost all recollection of everything else. He took the five hundred pieces of gold, and suffered the old woman to conduct him.

She went on before, and he followed her till they came to the door of a large house, at which she knocked. He came up to her just as a young female Greek slave opened the door. The old woman made him go in first; he passed through a well-paved court, and she then introduced him into a hall, the furniture of which confirmed him in the high opinion he had conceived of the mistress of the house. While the old woman went to inform the young lady of his arrival, he sat down; and as it was rather warm, he took off his turban, and laid it by the side of him. The lady of the house immediately made her appearance, and he was much more struck with her beauty than with the magnificence and richness of her dress. He rose up the moment he perceived her. The lady requested him with a pleasing air to resume his place, and seated herself by his side. She expressed great joy at seeing him; and after some kind compliments, she said to him, "We are not here sufficiently at our ease; come, give me your hand." And the same instant holding out her own, she led him to a distant apartment, where they remained some time in conversation; she then left him with a promise of returning

in a few moments. He waited some time, when, instead of the lady, a large black slave entered, with a scimitar in his hand, and casting a most terrible look at my brother, "What business have you here?" he cried in a haughty tone. At this sight, Alnaschar was seized with so violent a fright, he could not make any answer. The black immediately stripped him, took away his gold, and wounded him with his scimitar in several parts of his flesh. The poor unfortunate man fell down on the ground, where he remained without motion, though he did not lose his senses. The black slave thinking he had killed him, asked for some salt, of which the Greek slave brought him a large dish. They then rubbed it over my brother's wounds, and although the pain he felt was almost intolerable, he had the presence of mind to show no signs of life. The black slave and the young Greek now went away, and the old woman who had caught my brother in this snare, came and took him by the legs and drew him towards a trap-door, which she opened. She then threw him in, and he perceived that he was in a subterraneous place, in which there were the bodies of different people who had been murdered. It was some time, however, before he knew this, as the violence of the fall had stunned him, and took away his senses. The salt with which his wounds had been rubbed was what preserved his life; he soon after felt himself sufficiently strong to sit up; and at the end of two days he opened the trap-door in the night, and observing a place in a court in which he could conceal himself, he remained there till daybreak. He then saw the detestable old woman come out; she opened the street door, and went in search of more prey. As soon as she was gone too far to observe him, he let himself out of this cut-throat house, and fled to mine. He then informed me of the numerous adventures he had encountered in so short a space of time.

At the end of a month he was quite cured of his wounds, by means of the infallible remedies I made him apply. He then resolved to revenge himself on the old woman who had so cruelly deceived him. For this purpose he took a purse large enough to hold five hundred pieces of money, but instead of gold he filled it with bits of glass.

My brother then tied the purse round his girdle, and disguised himself as an old woman. After which he took a scimitar, and concealed it under his dress. He went out early one morning, and soon met the old hag, who was already walking about the city seeking to entrap some one or other. Alnaschar accosted her, and feigning the voice of a woman, he said, "Can you do me the favour to lend me a money balance? I am a Persian, and but just arrived in this city. I have brought five hundred pieces of gold from my own country, and I wish to see if they are weight." "My good woman," replied the other, "you could not have addressed yourself to a more proper person than me. You need only follow me, and I will take you to the house of my son, who is a money-changer; and he will take a pleasure in weighing the gold for you himself, and save you the trouble. Do not let us lose any time, for fear he should be gone to his shop." My brother followed her to the same house where she had introduced him the first time, and the door was opened by the Greek slave.

The old woman conducted my brother into the hall, where she bid him wait a moment, while she went to find her son. The pretended son then appeared in the form of that villanous black slave. "Come, my old woman," he called out, "get up and follow me." Having spoken thus, he walked on before to the place where he wished to murder him. Alnaschar got up and followed the black slave; and as he was going along, he drew his scimitar from under his robe, and gave him such a blow on the hind part of the neck, that he cut his head completely off. He then took it up in one hand, and with the other he

drew the body after him to the subterraneous building, where he lodged both of them in safety. The Greek slave, who was used to this business, directly after brought a basin of salt; but when she saw Alnaschar with the scimitar in his hand, and without the veil, that had concealed his face, she let the basin fall and ran away; but my brother being able to run faster, soon overtook her, and made her head fly from her shoulders. At hearing this noise, the wicked old woman ran to see what was the matter, when Alnaschar seized her before she had time to make her escape. "Wretch," he exclaimed, "dost thou not know me?" "Alas, sir," she tremblingly answered, "I do not remember to have ever seen you before; who are you?" "I am the person into whose house you came the other day to request leave to wash yourself, and say your hypocritical prayers. Do you not recollect it?" She instantly fell down on her knees, and implored his pardon, but he cut her into four pieces.

The lady alone remained, who knew nothing at all of what was passing. My brother went to look after her, and discovered her in a chamber. When she saw him enter, she was near fainting. She prayed him to spare her life, and he had the generosity to grant it. "How can you, madam," he asked, "live with such infamous wretches as those on whom I have now so justly revenged myself?" "I was," she answered, "the wife of a very worthy merchant, and that wicked old woman, of whose treachery I was ignorant, sometimes came to see me. "Madam," said she one day to me, "we are going to have a gay and splendid wedding at our house, and you will enjoy a great deal of pleasure there, if you will honour us with your company." I suffered myself to be prevailed upon to go; and for this purpose I dressed myself in my richest habit, and took a hundred pieces of gold with me. I followed her till she came to this house, where I saw this black, who detained me here by force; and it is now three years that I have been here, though very much against my inclination." "From the manner in which this black proceeded, he must have amassed," replied my brother, "great wealth." "So much so," she answered, "that if you could carry it away, you would never be poor again. Follow me, and I will show it you." She conducted Alnaschar into a room, where in truth he saw so many coffers filled with gold that he could not conceal his astonishment. "Go," she cried, "and bring here a sufficient number of persons to carry all this away."

My brother did not wait to be told a second time; he went away, and was absent only till he collected ten men together. He brought them back with him, and was much astonished to find the door of the house open; but his astonishment was still greater, when on going into the room where he had seen the coffers, he could not discover a single one. The lady had been both more cunning and more diligent than he had, and she and the coffers had entirely vanished during my brother's absence. That he might not return with empty hands, he ordered the men to take, instead of the coffers, whatever moveables they could find in the chambers and different apartments, whence he took much more than was sufficient to repay him the value of his five hundred pieces of gold, of which they had robbed him. But in going away from the house, my brother forgot to shut the door; and the neighbours, who knew my brother, and had observed the porters both come and go, went and informed the judge of the whole business, which appeared to them of a very suspicious nature.

Alnaschar passed the night quite at his ease; but early the next morning, as he was going out, he encountered twenty men belonging to the police, who immediately seized him. "You must come with us," they cried; "our master wants to speak with you." My brother begged them to have a moment's patience, and offered them a sum of money if they would permit him to escape; but instead of paying any attention to what he said, they bound him, and com-

pelled him to go with them. In the street they met with an old friend of my brother's, who stopped them to know the reason of their taking him in this manner. He also proposed to give them a considerable sum to suffer him to escape, and report to the judge that they were unable to find him. But he could not succeed with them, and they carried Alnaschar before the judge of the police.

As soon as he came into his presence, the magistrate said to him, "I desire you to inform me from what place you got all that furniture which you had brought home yesterday?" "Sir," replied Alnaschar, "I am ready to tell you the whole truth, but permit me in the first place to implore your clemency; and I request of you to give me your word that nothing shall happen to me." "I do so," said the judge. My brother then related without disguise every circumstance that had happened to him from the time the old woman first came to his house to request leave to say her prayers, till he returned to the chamber, in which he had left the young lady, but whom he could not find there, after having killed the black, the Greek slave, and the old woman. With regard to what he had carried home, he entreated the judge to suffer him to keep at least a part of it, to recompense him for the five hundred pieces of gold of which they had robbed him.

The judge immediately sent some of his people to my brother's house to bring away everything he had, without promising to give him any part; and as soon as the things were deposited in his warehouse, he ordered my brother instantly to leave the city, and never to return again, on forfeiture of his life; because he was fearful, if my brother remained there, he would go and complain of his injustice to the caliph. Alnaschar in the mean time obeyed the order without a murmur; he departed from the city, and fled for refuge to another town. But on his road he encountered some robbers, who stripped him as bare as my hand. I was no sooner informed of this new misfortune, than I took some clothes with me and went to find him out: after consoling him as well as it was in my power, I brought him back with me, and made him enter the city quite privately, and I took as much care of him as of my other brothers.

THE HISTORY OF THE BARBER'S SIXTH BROTHER.

THE history of my sixth brother is the only one that now remains to be told, and he was called Schacabac, the hare-lipped. He was at first sufficiently industrious to employ the hundred drachms of silver which came to his share, in common with me and his other brothers, in a very advantageous manner; but at length, by reverse of fortune, he was reduced to the necessity of begging his bread. In this occupation he acquitted himself with great address, and his chief aim was to procure admission, by bribing the officers and domestics, into the houses of the great, and by having access to their persons to excite their compassion.

He one day passed by a very magnificent building, through the door of which he observed a spacious court, where he saw a vast number of servants. He went up to one of them, and inquired of them to whom the house belonged. "My good man," answered the domestic, "where can you come from to ask such a question? Any one you met would tell you it belonged to a Barmecide." My brother, to whom the liberal and generous dispositions of the Barmecides were well known, addressed himself to the porters, for there were more than one, and requested them to afford him some charity. "Come in," answered they, "no one prevents you, and speak to our master; he will send you back well satisfied."

My brother did not expect so much kindness; and after returning many thanks to the porters, he with their permission entered the palace, which was so large that it took him some time to find the apartment belonging to the Barmecide. He at length came to a large square building in a most beautiful style of architecture, into which he entered by a vestibule that led to a fine garden, the walks of which were formed of stones of different colours very pleasant to the eye. The apartments which surrounded this building on the ground floor were almost all open, and shaded only by some large curtains in order to keep off the sun, and which they drew aside to admit the fresh air when the heat began to subside.

My brother would have been most highly delighted in so pleasant a spot, had his mind been sufficiently at ease to have enjoyed it. He advanced still further and entered a hall, which was very richly furnished, and ornamented with foliage, painted in azure and gold. He perceived a venerable old man, whose beard was long and white, sitting on a sofa, and in the most distinguished place. Hence he judged it was the master of the house. In fact, it was the Barmecide himself, who told him in an obliging manner that he was welcome, and asked him what he wished. "My lord," answered my brother, in a lamentable tone, in order to excite his pity, "I am a poor man who stands very much in need of the assistance of such powerful and generous persons as yourself." He could not have done better than address himself to the person he did, for he was possessed of a thousand amiable qualities.

The Barmecide was much astonished at my brother's answer; and putting both his hands to his breast, as if to tear his habit, as a mark of commiseration, "Is it possible," he cried, "that I should live at Bagdad, and that such a man as you should be so much distressed as you say you are? I cannot suffer this." At this exclamation my brother, thinking he was going to give him a singular proof of his liberality, wished him every blessing. "It shall never be said," replied the Barmecide, "that I abandon you, nor do I intend that you shall again leave me." "Sir," replied my brother, "I swear to you that I have not eaten anything this day." "What," cried the Barmecide, "is it true that at this late hour you have not yet broken your fast? Alas! poor man, he will die with hunger! Here, boy," added he, raising his voice, "bring us instantly a basin of water, that we may wash our hands."

Although no boy made his appearance, and my brother observed neither basin nor water, the Barmecide nevertheless began to rub his hands, as if some one held the water for him; and while he was doing this, he said to my brother, "Come close and wash along with me." Schacabac by this supposed that the Barmecide was fond of fun, and as he himself liked a little rillery, and was not ignorant of the submission the rich expected from the poor, he approached him and did the same.

"Come," said the Barmecide, "now bring us something to eat, and mind you do not keep us waiting." He had no sooner said this than he began, although nothing had been brought to eat, as if he had taken something in his plate, and pretended to put it to his mouth and chew it, calling out at the same time to my brother, "Eat, I entreat you, my guest; make yourself quite at home. Eat, I beg of you: you seem, for a hungry man, to have but a very poor appetite." "Pardon me, my lord," replied Schacabac, imitating his motions at the same time very accurately; "you see I lose no time, and understand my business very well." "What think you of this bread," said the Barmecide, "don't you find it excellent?" "In truth, my lord," answered my brother, who in fact saw neither bread nor meat, "I never ate anything more white or delicate." "Eat your fill, then," rejoined the Barmecide; "the slave who made this excellent bread cost me, I assure you, five hundred pieces

of gold." Then continuing to praise the female slave who was his baker, and boasting of his bread, which my brother only devoured in idea, he said, "Boy, bring us another dish. Come, my friend," he continued to my brother, though no other boy appeared, "taste this fresh dish, and tell me if you have ever eaten any boiled mutton and barley better dressed than this." "Oh, it is admirable," answered my brother; "I, therefore, you see, help myself very plentifully." "It affords me great pleasure," added the Barmecide, "to see you; and I entreat you not to suffer any of these dishes to be taken away, since you find them so much to your taste." He presently called for a goose with sweet sauce, and dressed with vinegar, honey, dried raisins, grey peas, and dried figs. This was brought in the same manner as the mutton had been. "This goose is nice and fat," said the Barmecide; "here, take only a wing and a thigh, for you must nurse your appetite, as there are many more things yet to come." In short, he called for many other dishes of different kinds, of which my brother, all the time dying with hunger, continued to pretend to eat. But what he boasted the most of was a lamb that had been fattened with pistachio-nuts, and which he ordered, and was served in the same manner as the other dishes had been. "Now this," said he, "is a dish you never meet with anywhere but at my table, and I wish you to eat your fill of it." As he said this, he pretended to take a piece in his hand, and putting it to my brother's mouth, "Take and eat this," he said, "and you will not think ill of my judgment in boasting of this dish." My brother held his head forward, opened his mouth, pretended to take the piece, and to chew and swallow it with the greatest pleasure. "I was quite sure," said the Barmecide, "you would think it excellent." "Nothing can be more so," replied Schacabac; "in short, no table can be more deliciously served than yours." "Now bring me the ragout," said the other; "and I do not think you will be less pleased with that than with the lamb. Well, what do you think of it?" "It is wonderful," answered my brother; "we at the same time have in this the flavour of amber, cloves, nutmegs, ginger, pepper, and sweet herbs; and yet they are all so well balanced that the presence of one does not prevent the flavour of the rest. How delicious it is!" "Do justice to it, then," cried the Barmecide, "and eat heartily, I beg. Hollo, boy," cried he, raising his voice, "bring us a fresh ragout." "Oh, no, if you please," said Schacabac, "for in truth, my lord, I cannot indeed eat any more."

"Let the dessert, then," said the Barmecide, "be served, and the fruit brought." He then waited a few moments, in order to give the servants time to change the dishes, then resuming his speech, he said, "Taste these almonds, they are just gathered, and very good." They then both pretended to take the skin off the almonds and eat them. The Barmecide after this invited my brother to partake of many other things. "Here are, you see," said he, "all sorts of fruits, cakes, dried comfits, and preserves: take what you like." Then stretching out his hand as if he was going to give him something, "Take this lozenge," he said, "it is excellent to assist digestion." Schacabac pretended to take and eat it. "Here is no want of musk in this, my lord." "I have these lozenges made at home," said the Barmecide; "and for these, as well as everything else in my house, nothing is spared." He still continued to persuade my brother to eat. "For a man," he said, "who was almost starving when he came here, you have really eaten hardly anything." "My lord," replied Schacabac, whose jaws were weary of chewing nothing, "I assure you I am so full that I cannot eat a morsel more."

"Well, then," cried the Barmecide, "after having eaten so heartily, it is necessary to drink a little. You have no objection to good wine?" "My lord," replied my brother, "if you will excuse me, I never drink wine, because it is forbidden me." "Oh, you are too scrupulous," said the other; "come,

come, do as I do." "To oblige you, then," replied Schacabac, "I will; for I observe you do not like that anything should be omitted in our feast. But as I am not in the habit of drinking wine, I am fearful of being guilty of some fault against good breeding, and even against the respect that is due to you. It is for this reason that I still entreat you to excuse my drinking any wine; I shall be well satisfied with water." "No, no," said the Barmecide, "you must drink wine." At the same time he ordered some to be brought. But the wine, like the dinner and dessert, never in reality appeared. He then pretended to pour some out, and drank the first glass. After that he poured out another glass for my brother, and presenting it to him, "Come, drink my health," he cried, "and tell me if you think the wine good."

My brother took the ideal glass, and first holding it up, and looking to see if it were of a good bright colour, he put it to his nose in order to examine if it had an agreeable perfume; he then, making a most profound reverence to the Barmecide, to show that he took the liberty to drink his health, drank it off, accompanied at the same time with proofs of receiving great pleasure from the draught. "My lord," he said, "I find this wine excellent; but it does not seem to me quite strong enough." "You have only to speak," replied the other, "if you wish for any stronger. I have various sorts in my cellar. We will see if this will suit you better." He then pretended to pour out some of another sort for himself, and also some for my brother. He did this so frequently that Schacabac, pretending that the wine had got into his head, feigned to be drunk. He raised his hand and gave the Barmecide such a violent blow that he knocked him down. He was going to strike him a second time, but the Barmecide, holding out his hand to avoid the blow, called out, "Are you mad?" My brother then recollecting himself, said, "My lord, you had the goodness to receive your slave into your house, and to make a great feast for him: you ought to have been satisfied with having made him eat, and not compelled him to drink wine. I told you at first that I should be guilty of some disrespect; I am very sorry for it, and ask you a thousand pardons."

He had hardly finished this speech before the Barmecide, instead of putting himself in a great passion, and being very angry, burst into a violent fit of laughter. "I have searched for a long time," said he, "for a person of your disposition. I not only pardon the blow you have given me, but from this moment I wish to look upon you as one of my friends, and that you shall make no other house than mine your home. You have had the complaisance to accommodate yourself to my humour, and the patience to carry on the pleasantry to the end; but we will now eat in reality." Having said this, he clapped his hands, when several slaves instantly appeared, whom he ordered to set out the table and serve dinner up. His commands were quickly obeyed, and my brother was now in reality treated with all the same dishes he had before partaken of in idea. As soon as the table was cleared, they brought some wine; and a number of beautiful female slaves most richly dressed appeared, and began to sing some pleasant airs to the sound of instruments. Schacabac had in the end every reason to be satisfied with the kindness and civility of the Barmecide, who took a great fancy to him, and treated him in the most familiar manner; he gave him also a handsome dress from his own wardrobe.

The Barmecide found my brother possessed of so much knowledge of various sorts, that in the course of a few days he intrusted him with the care of all his house and other affairs; and my brother acquitted himself of his charge during the time it lasted, which was twenty years, to the complete satisfaction of his employer. At the end of this period the generous Barmecide, worn out with old age, paid the common debt of nature; and as he did not leave any heirs, they confiscated all his fortune to the use of the prince. They even took from

my brother everything he had saved. Finding himself thus reduced to the state he was in at first, he joined a caravan of pilgrims going to Mecca, with the intention of making, by means of their charitable disposition, the same pilgrimage. During their journey, the caravan was unfortunately attacked and plundered by a party of Bedouin Arabs, who were more numerous than the pilgrims.

My brother thus became the slave of a Bedouin, who for many days continually gave him the bastinado, in order to induce him to get himself ransomed. Schacabac protested to him that it was all to no purpose for him to ill-treat him in this manner. "I am your slave," said he, "and you may dispose of me as you like; but I declare to you that I am in the most extreme poverty, and that it is not in my power to ransom myself." My brother tried every expedient to convince him of his wretched condition; he endeavoured to soften him by his tears; but the Bedouin was inexorable, and through revenge at finding himself disappointed of a considerable sum of money, which he fully expected to receive, he took his knife and slit up the lips of my brother, and by this inhuman act he endeavoured to repay himself for the loss he supposed himself to have suffered.

The Bedouin had a wife, who was rather handsome, and he very soon after left my brother with her when he went on his excursions. At these times his wife left no means untried to console him for the rigour of his situation. She even gave him to understand that she was in love with him; but he dared not return her passion, for fear he should have reason to repent of it. He therefore took every precaution to avoid being alone with her whenever she seemed to wish it. She at length became so much accustomed to joke and amuse herself with the hard-hearted Schacabac whenever she met him, that she one day forgot herself, and did it in the presence of her husband. My poor brother, without in the least thinking he was observed, for so his ill-luck would have it, returned her pleasantries. The Bedouin immediately imagined that they passed their time during his absence in a way not very consistent with his honour. This suspicion put him into the greatest rage; he threw himself upon my brother, and after mutilating him in the most barbarous manner, he carried him on a camel to the top of a high desert mountain, where he left him. The road to Bagdad happened to pass over this very mountain, and some travellers, who accidentally met him there, informed me where he was to be found. I made all the haste I could to the place, and I found the unfortunate Schacabac in the most deplorable condition it was possible to be in. I afforded him every assistance and aid he stood in need of, and brought him back with me into the city.

This was what I related to the caliph Mostanser Billah (added the barber). The prince very much applauded my conduct by reiterated fits of laughter. "This must be the reason," he said to me, "that they have given you, and so justly, the name of 'Silent;' and no one can say you do not deserve it. Nevertheless, I have some private reasons for wishing you to leave the town; I therefore order you immediately to quit the city. Go, and never let me hear of you again." I yielded to necessity, and travelled for many years in distant parts. I at length was informed that the caliph was dead; I returned therefore to Bagdad, where I did not find one of my brothers alive. It was on my return to this city that I rendered to this lame young man the important service which you have been informed of. You are also witnesses of his great ingratitude, and of the injurious manner in which he has treated me. Instead of acknowledging his great obligations to me, he has chosen rather to wander at a distance from his own country, in order to avoid me. As soon as I discovered that he had left Bagdad, and although no person could give me any information of the

road he had taken, or into what country he had travelled, I did not hesitate a moment but instantly set out to seek him. I passed on from province to province for a considerable length of time, and I accidentally met him to-day, at a time I least expected it, and least of all did I expect to find him so irritated against me.

Having in this manner related the history of the lame young man and the barber of Bagdad to the sultan of Casgar, the tailor went on as follows.

When the barber had finished his story, we plainly perceived the young man was not wrong in accusing him of being a great chatterer. We nevertheless wished that he should remain with us, and partake of the feast which the master of the house had prepared for us. We then sat down at table, and continued to enjoy ourselves till the time of the last prayers before sunset. All the company then separated, and I returned to my shop, where I remained till it was time to shut it up and go to my house.

It was during this interval that the little hunchback, who was half-drunk, came before my shop; which led to the events already detailed. It is now for your majesty to determine whether we are worthy of your clemency or your anger; whether we deserve to live or die.

The sultan of Casgar's countenance expressed so much satisfaction and content, that it gave new life to the tailor and his companions. "I cannot deny," he said, "that I am more astonished at the history of the lame young man, of the barber, and with the adventures of his brothers, than at anything in the history of my buffoon. But before I send you all four back to your own houses, and even before I order the burial of the little hunchback, I wish to see this barber who has been the cause of your pardon. And since he is now in my capital, it will not be difficult to satisfy my curiosity." He immediately ordered one of his attendants to go and find him out, and to take the tailor with him, who knew where he most probably was.

The officer and tailor were not long absent, and brought back the barber with them, whom they presented to the sultan. He appeared like a man of about ninety. His beard and eyebrows were as white as snow, his ears hung down a considerable length, and his nose was very long. The sultan could scarcely refrain from laughter at the sight of him. "Man of silence," said he to the barber, "I understand that you are acquainted with many wonderful histories; I wish very much that you would relate one of them to me." "Sire," replied the barber, "for the present we will, if it please your majesty, not speak of the histories which I may know; but I most humbly entreat you to permit me to ask one question, and that is, for what reason this Christian, this Jew, this Mussulman, and this hunchback whom I see extended on the ground, are in your majesty's presence?" The sultan smiled at the liberty the barber took, and said, "Of what consequence can that be to you?" "Sire," returned the barber, "it is of consequence to me to make this inquiry; namely, that your majesty may know that I am not that great talker which some people pretend, but a man who has very justly acquired the title of the Silent."

The sultan of Casgar had the complaisance to satisfy the barber's curiosity, and desired the adventures of the little hunchback to be related to him. When the barber had heard the whole story, he shook his head, as if he meant to imply that he thought there was something which he could not well comprehend. "Truly," he exclaimed, "this is a very wonderful history; but I should vastly like to examine this little hunchback a little more closely." He then went near to him, and sat down on the ground. He took his head between his knees, and after examining him very attentively, he suddenly burst

out into a violent fit of laughter, and with so little restraint that he absolutely fell backwards, without at all considering that he was in the presence of the sultan of Casgar. He then got up, laughing heartily the whole time. "You may very well say," he at length cried, "that no one dies without a cause. If ever a history deserved to be written in letters of gold, it is this of the hunchback."

This speech made every one look upon the barber as a buffoon, or like an old man who had lost his senses.

"Man of silence," said the sultan, "answer me. What is the reason of your clamorous laughter?" "Sire," replied the barber, "I swear, by your majesty's good-nature, that this hunchback fellow is not dead: there is still some life in him; and I wish to be considered as a fool and a madman if I do not instantly prove it to you." Having said this, he produced a box in which there were various medicines, and which he always carried about with him, to use as occasion might require. He opened it, and taking out a phial containing a sort of balsam, he rubbed some of it for a length of time on the neck of the hunchback. He then drew out of a case an iron instrument suited to the purpose, with which he set open his jaws; and by these means he was enabled to put a small pair of pincers into the hunchback's throat, and drew out the fish-bone, which he held up and showed to all who were present. Almost immediately after this the hunchback gave a sneeze, stretched out his hands and feet, opened his eyes, and gave many other proofs of being alive.

The sultan of Casgar, and all who were witness to this excellent operation, were less surprised at seeing the hunchback brought to life, although he had passed a night and almost a whole day without the least apparent sign of animation, than they were at the merit and skill of the barber, whom they now began to regard, in spite of all his faults, as a very great personage. The sultan was so filled with joy and admiration, that he ordered the history of the hunchback, as well as that of the barber, to be instantly committed to writing, that the knowledge of it, which so well deserved to be preserved, might never be forgotten. He was not satisfied with this; but in order that the tailor, the Jewish physician, the purveyor, and the Christian merchant might ever remember with pleasure the adventures which the accident of the hunchback had caused them, he presented each of them with a very rich robe, which he made them put on in his presence before he dismissed them; and he bestowed upon the barber a large pension, and retained him ever afterwards near his person.

The sultana Scheherazade thus finished this long series of adventures, to which the supposed death of the hunchback had given rise. She was now silent. Her sister Dinarzade, observing that she had done speaking, said to her, "My dear princess, my sultana, I am much the more delighted with the story you have just finished, because it was brought to a conclusion by so unexpected an incident. I really thought the little hunchback was quite dead." "This surprise has also afforded me much pleasure," said Schahriar, "as well as the adventures of the barber's brothers." "The history of the lame young man of Bagdad has also very much diverted me," rejoined Dinarzade. "I am highly pleased, my dear sister," replied Scheherazade, "at having been able thus to entertain the sultan, our lord and master, as well as yourself; and since I have had the good fortune not to weary his majesty, if he will have the goodness to prolong my life still further, I will have the honour to relate to him the history of the amours of Aboulhassan Ali Ebn Becar, and of Schémaelnihar, the favourite of the caliph Haroun Alraschid, which is not less worthy of his attention, and yours also, than the history

of the hunchback." The sultan of India, who was well satisfied at everything Scheherazadè had hitherto related, was determined not to forego the pleasure of hearing this other history which she promised. He now therefore arose and went to prayers, and then sat in council; and the next morning Dinarzadè failed not to remind her sister of her promise, which she was thus prepared to fulfil.

THE HISTORY OF ABOULHASSAN ALI EBN BECAR AND OF SCHEMSELNIHAR, THE FAVOURITE OF THE CALIPH HAROUN ALRASCHID.

DURING the reign of the caliph Haroun Alraschid, there lived a druggist at Bagdad, whose name was Aboulhassan Ebn Thaher. He was a man of considerable wealth; and a well-made and agreeable person. He possessed more understanding and politeness than generally falls to the lot of people of his profession. His rectitude, sincerity, and liveliness of disposition, made him beloved and sought after by every one. The caliph, who was well acquainted with his merit, placed the most implicit confidence in him. He esteemed him so highly, that he reposed in him the sole care of procuring for his favourite ladies everything for which they had occasion. He chose their dresses, the furniture of their apartments, and their jewellery; in all of which departments he gave proofs of most excellent taste.

His various good qualities, and the favour of the caliph, caused the sons of the emirs, and other officers of the highest rank, to frequent his house; and it, in this manner, became the rendezvous of all the nobles of the court. Among other young men, who made almost a daily practice of going there, was one whom Ebn Thaher esteemed above all the rest, and with whom he contracted a most intimate friendship. This young nobleman's name was Aboulhassan Ali Ebn Becar; and he derived his origin from an ancient royal family of Persia, which had continued extant at Bagdad, from the time when the Mussulman arms made a conquest of that kingdom. Nature seemed to have taken a pleasure in combining in this young prince every mental endowment and personal accomplishment. He possessed a countenance of the most finished beauty, his figure was fine, his air elegant and easy, and the expression of his face so engaging, that no one could see him without instantly loving him. Whenever he spoke he used the most appropriate and pure language, while there was something even in the tone of his voice that charmed all who heard him. To complete the whole, as his understanding and judgment were of the first rank, so all his thoughts and expressions were most admirable and just. He was, moreover, so reserved and modest, that he advanced nothing till he had taken every possible precaution to avoid any suspicion of preferring his own opinion or sentiments to those of another. Being a young man in every respect such as I have described him to you, it is not to be wondered at that Ebn Thaher distinguished him in a particular manner from the other young noblemen of the court, whose vices, for the most part, served only as a foil to his virtues.

As this prince was one day at the house of Ebn Thaher, they observed a lady come to the door mounted upon a black and white mule, and surrounded by ten female slaves, who accompanied her on foot. They were all very handsome, at least as far as could be judged from their air, and through the veils that covered their faces. The lady herself had on a rose-coloured girdle at least four fingers in width, upon which were fastened diamonds and pearls of the largest size; and it was no difficult matter to conjecture that her beauty

surpassed that of her attendants, as much as the moon at its full exceeds the crescent of two days old. She came for the purpose of executing some commission; and as it was necessary to speak to Ebn Thaher, she went into his shop, which was very large and commodious. He received her with every mark of respect, begged her to be seated, and conducted her by the hand to the most honourable place.

The prince of Persia, in the mean time, did not choose to let such an excellent opportunity of showing his politeness and his gallantry escape him; he placed a cushion, covered with cloth of gold, for the lady to rest upon: then immediately retired, that she might sit down. After this he made his compliments by kissing the carpet under her feet, got up and stood before her at the end of the sofa. As she felt herself quite at home with Ebn Thaher, she took off her veil, and displayed in the eyes of the prince of Persia a beauty so extraordinary, that it pierced him to the bottom of his heart. Nor could the lady on her part help looking at the prince, whose person made an equal impression on her. "I beg of you, sir," she said to him in an obliging manner, "to be seated." The prince of Persia obeyed, and sat down on the edge of the sofa. He kept his eyes constantly fixed upon her, and swallowed large draughts of the delicious poison of love. She soon perceived what passed in his mind, and this discovery completed her own passion. She then got up and went to Ebn Thaher, and after having informed him, in a whisper, of the motive of her visit, she inquired of him what was the name and country of the prince of Persia. "Madam," replied Ebn Thaher, "this young nobleman, of whom you are speaking, is called Aboulhassan Ali Ebn Becar, and is of the blood royal of Persia."

The lady was delighted to find that the man she was so passionately in love with was of such a high rank. "You mean, without doubt, I suppose," replied she, "that he is descended from the kings of Persia." "I do, madam," returned Ebn Thaher; "the last kings of Persia are his ancestors; and since the conquest of that kingdom, the princes of his family have always been held in estimation at the court of our caliphs." "You will afford us a great pleasure," said the lady, "if you will make me acquainted with this young nobleman. When I shall send this female to you," added she, pointing to one of her slaves, "to request you to come and see me, I beg you will bring him with you; I very much wish that he should see the splendour and magnificence of my palace, that he may both see and publish to the world that avarice does not hold her court among people of quality at Bagdad. You understand, and attend to what I say to you. Pray do not fail; if you do, I shall be very angry with you, and will never come and see you again as long as I live."

Ebn Thaher possessed too much penetration not to understand by this speech what were the sentiments of the lady. "God preserve me, my princess," replied he, "from giving you any cause to be offended with me. To execute your orders will ever be a law to me." Having received this answer, the lady took her leave of Ebn Thaher with an inclination of her head; and after casting a most obliging look at the prince of Persia, she mounted her mule and departed.

Distractedly in love with this lady, he continued looking at her as long as she was in sight; and even after he had lost sight of her, it was a long time before he took his eyes from the way she went. Ebn Thaher then remarked to him, that he was observed by some people, who were ready to laugh at seeing him in that attitude. "Alas," said the prince to him, "you and all the world would have compassion upon me, if you knew that this beautiful lady, who has just left your house, had carried away by far the better part of me; and that what remains cannot live separate. Tell me, I conjure you," added he, "who this tyrannical lady is that compels people thus to love her, without giving them

time to think on the subject?" "My lord," replied Ebn Thaher, "it is the famous Schemselnihar, the first favourite of our sovereign master the caliph." "She is indeed called so," said the prince, "with the greatest justice and propriety, since she is more beautiful than the cloudless meridian sun." "It is true," replied Ebn Thaher, "and the Commander of the Faithful loves her, or, I might rather say, adores her. He has expressly commanded me to furnish her with everything she wishes, and even to anticipate her thoughts, if it were possible, in anything she may desire."

He entered into this conversation with the prince to prevent his falling in love, where the event must be unfortunate; but this, in fact, only served to inflame him the more. "I cannot doubt," cried he, "charming Schemselnihar, that I shall not be suffered to raise my thoughts to thee. I nevertheless feel, although without any hopes of being beloved in return, that it will not be in my power to cease from adoring thee. I will continue to love thee then, and will bless my fate that I am become the slave of the most beautiful object that the sun illumines."

Whilst the prince of Persia was thus consecrating his heart to the beautiful Schemselnihar, this lady, as she went home, continued to think upon the means she should pursue in order to see and converse with freedom with this prince. She was no sooner returned to the palace, than she sent back to Ebn Thaher that particular female slave whom she had pointed out to him, and in whom she placed the most implicit confidence, to request him to come and see her without delay; and to bring the prince of Persia along with him. The slave arrived at the shop of Ebn Thaher at the very time he was conversing with the prince, and while he was using the strongest arguments to endeavour to persuade him to give up his love for the favourite of the caliph. When the slave saw them together, she said, "My most honourable mistress, Schemselnihar, the first favourite of the Commander of the Faithful, entreats you both to come to the palace, where she expects you." Ebn Thaher, in order to show how ready he was to obey her, instantly got up, without answering the slave one word, and followed her, though not without considerable repugnance. As for the prince, he followed her without at all reflecting on the danger he ran from making this visit. The presence of Ebn Thaher, who had free admission to the favourite, made him perfectly easy on that subject. They both then followed the slave, who walked a little before them. They went into the palace of the caliph soon after her, and joined her at the door of the smaller palace, appropriated to Schemselnihar, which was already open. She introduced them into a large hall, where she begged them to be seated.

The prince of Persia thought himself in one of those delightful palaces which are promised to us in the other world. He had hitherto seen nothing that at all equalled the magnificence of the place where he now was. The carpets, cushions, and other furniture of the apartment, were most rich and beautiful. They had not long remained in this place before a black slave set out a table, covered with the most delicate dishes; the delicious smell of which afforded them a strong proof of the excellence of the seasoning. While they were eating, the slave who had escorted them did not leave them; she took great care to invite them to eat of those ragouts and dishes which she knew to be best; in the mean time, other slaves poured out some excellent wine, with which they finished their repast. When this was over, they presented to the prince of Persia and to Ebn Thaher each a separate basin, and a beautiful golden vase, full of water, to wash their hands. They afterwards brought them some perfume of aloes in a portable vessel, which was also of gold, with which they scented their beards and dress. Nor was perfumed water forgotten. It was brought in a golden vase, enriched with diamonds and rubies, made

expressly for this purpose, and was poured into both their hands, with which they rubbed their beards and their whole faces, as was the usual custom. They then sat down again in their places; but they were no sooner there, than the slave requested them to get up and follow her. She opened a door, which led from the hall where they were; and they entered a large saloon most wonderfully constructed. It was a dome supported by a hundred columns of marble, as white as alabaster. The pedestals and capitals of these columns were each ornamented with quadrupeds and birds of various species, worked in gold. The carpet of this wonderful saloon was composed of a single piece of cloth of gold, upon which were worked bunches of roses in red and white silk; the dome itself was painted in arabesque, and afforded a view of a multitude of charming objects. There was a small sofa between each column, ornamented in the same manner, together with large vases of porcelain, crystal, jasper, jet, porphyry, agate, and other valuable materials, all enriched with gold, and inlaid with precious stones. The spaces between the columns contained also large windows, with balconies of a proper height, and furnished in the same style of elegance with the sofas, from whence you looked into the most delicious garden in the world. Its walks were mosaicked with small stones of various colours, which represented the carpet of the saloon under the dome; and in this manner, while they looked on the floor, either in the saloon or garden, it seemed as if the dome and the garden, with all their beauties, formed one splendid whole. The view from every point was terminated at the end of the walks by two canals of water, as transparent as rock crystal, which preserved the same circular figure as the dome. One of these canals was raised above the other, and from the higher the water fell in a large body into the lower one. On their banks, at certain distances, were placed some beautiful bronze and gilt vases, all furnished with shrubs and flowers. These walks also separated from each other large spaces which were planted with lofty and thick trees, in the midst of which a thousand birds warbled the most melodious sounds; and diversified the scene by their various flights, and by the battles they fought while in the air, sometimes in sport, and at others in a more serious and cruel manner.

The prince of Persia and Ebn Thaher stopped a long time to examine the great magnificence of this place. They expressed strong marks of surprise and admiration at everything that struck them, particularly the prince of Persia, who had never before seen anything comparable to it. Ebn Thaher, too, although he had been before in this enchanting spot, could not refrain from admiring its beauties, which always appeared with an air of novelty. In short, they had not ceased from their admiration of these singular things, with which they were so agreeably taken up, when they suddenly perceived a company of females most richly dressed. They were all sitting down on the outside, at some distance from the dome, each on a seat made of Indian plantain wood, enriched with silver, inlaid in compartments, with a musical instrument in their hands, waiting only for the appointed signal to begin to play on them.

They both went and placed themselves in one of the balconies, from whence they had a direct view of them, and on looking towards the right hand, they saw below a large court, with an entrance into the garden up a flight of steps. The whole of this court was surrounded with very elegant apartments. The slave had left them, and as they were by themselves, they conversed together for some time. "I doubt not," said the prince of Persia to Ebn Thaher, "that you who are a sedate and wise man, look with very little satisfaction upon all these exhibitions of magnificence and power. In my eyes nothing in the whole world can be more surprising; and when I add to this the reflection that it is the splendid abode of the too amiable Schemselnihar, and that the first monarch

of the world makes it the place of his retirement, I confess to you that I think myself the most unfortunate of men. It seems to me that there cannot exist a more cruel fate than mine, to love an object completely in the power of my rival, and that in the very spot where that rival is so powerful, I am not, even at this very instant, secure of my life."

To this speech of the prince of Persia, Ebn Thaher thus answered: "I wish to God, sir, that I could give you as perfect an assurance of the happy issue of your attachment as I can of the safety of your person. Although this superb palace belongs to the caliph, it was erected expressly for Schemselnihar, and is called the PALACE OF CONTINUAL PLEASURES; and although it makes a part, as it were, of his own, yet be assured this lady here enjoys most perfect liberty. She is not surrounded by eunuchs, who watch her minutest actions. These buildings are appropriated solely to her use, and she has the absolute disposal of the whole, as she thinks proper. She goes out, and walks about the city wherever she pleases, without asking leave of any one; she returns at her own time, and the caliph never comes to visit her, without first sending Mesrour, the chief of the eunuchs, to give her notice of it, and to prepare for his reception. Your mind, therefore, ought not to be disturbed, but remain in a tranquil state; be attentive, therefore, to a concert, which I perceive Schemselnihar is going to treat us with."

At the very instant Ebn Thaher had done speaking, the prince of Persia and he both observed the slave, who was the confidant of the favourite, come and order the females, that were seated in front of them, to sing and play on their several instruments. They all immediately began a sort of prelude, and after playing thus for some time, one of them sung alone, and accompanied herself on a lute, most admirably. As she had been informed of the subject upon which she was to sing, the words of her song were in such perfect unison with the feelings of the prince of Persia, that he could not help applauding her at the conclusion of the couplet. "Is it possible," he cried, "that you can have the faculty of penetrating the inmost thought of others, and that the knowledge you have of what passes in my heart has enabled you to give my feelings utterance by the sound of your delightful voice? I could not myself have expressed them in more appropriate terms." To this speech the female answered not a word. She went on and sung several other stanzas, which so much affected the prince that he repeated some of them with tears in his eyes; whence it was sufficiently evident to whom he made the application. When she had finished all the couplets, she and her companions stood up and sang altogether, some words to the following effect, that *the full moon was about to rise in all its splendour, and going soon to approach the sun*. The meaning of which was, that Schemselnihar was about to appear, and that the prince of Persia would immediately have the pleasure of seeing her.

In fact, Ebn Thaher and the prince, looking towards one side of the court, observed the confidential slave approach, followed by ten black females, who with difficulty carried a large throne of massive silver, most elegantly wrought, which the slave made them place at a certain distance from the prince and Ebn Thaher. After this the black slaves retired behind some trees at the end of a walk. Then twenty most beautiful females, richly and uniformly dressed, advanced in two rows, singing and playing on different instruments, and ranged themselves on either side of the throne.

The prince of Persia and Ebn Thaher beheld all these things with the greatest possible attention, eager and curious to know in what it would end. At last, they saw come out of the same door, whence the ten black slaves, who had brought the throne, and the twenty other slaves had come, ten other females equally beautiful and handsomely adorned as the former. They

stopped at the door, waiting some moments for the favourite, who then issued forth, and placed herself in the midst of them. It was very easy to distinguish her from the rest, as well by her person and majestic air, as by a sort of mantle of very light materials, enriched with azure and gold, which she wore fastened to her shoulders, over the other parts of her dress, which was the most appropriate, best made, and most magnificent that can be imagined. She advanced with a degree of majesty which did not ill represent the sun in its course, in the midst of clouds, which receive its rays without diminishing its splendour. She then seated herself upon the silver throne that they had brought for that purpose.

As soon as the prince of Persia perceived Schemselnihar, he had eyes for nothing else. "We cease our inquiries," said he to Ebn Thaher, "after the object of our search, when it appears before us; and we are no longer in a state of doubt when the truth is evident. Look at this divine beauty, she is the origin of all my evils: evils, indeed, which I bless, however severe and however lasting they may become. At sight of this object I am no longer myself; my restless soul revolts against its master, and I feel that it strives to abandon me. Go, then, my soul, I give thee leave; but let thy flight be for the advantage and preservation of this weak frame. It is you, too cruel Ebn Thaher, who are the cause of my disorder. You imagined it would afford me pleasure to bring me here, and I perceive that I am only come to court my destruction. Pardon me," he added, recovering himself a little, "I deceive myself, for I was determined to come, and can only complain of myself." At these words he wept most violently. "I am very glad," said Ebn Thaher, "that you at last do me justice. When I told you that Schemselnihar was the first favourite of the caliph, I did so for the express purpose of preventing this direful and fatal passion, which you seem to take a pleasure in nourishing in your heart. Everything you see here ought to make you endeavour to disengage yourself, and to excite only sentiments of gratitude and respect for the honour Schemselnihar has been willing to do you, in ordering me to introduce you here. Recollect yourself then, recall your wandering reason, and put yourself in a state to appear before her in a way her kindness and condescension deserve. See, she approaches. If this affair were to come over again, I would in truth act very differently; but the thing is done, and I trust in God that we shall not repent it. I have nothing more to say," added he, "but that love is a traitor, who will involve you in such an abyss that you can never again extricate yourself."

Ebn Thaher had no time to say any more, as Schemselnihar now came up. She placed herself on the throne, and saluted them both by an inclination of her hand. Her eyes, however, were fixed upon the prince, and they both spoke a language intermingled with sighs, by which, in a short time, they understood more than they would have done in an age from actual conversation. The more Schemselnihar looked at the prince, the more did his looks tend to confirm her opinion, that she was not indifferent to him; and being thus already convinced of his passion, Schemselnihar thought herself the happiest being in the whole world. She at length took her eyes off him, to give orders for the females, who had sung before, to approach. They rose up, and while they were walking forward, the black slaves came from the walk, where they had remained, and brought their seats, and placed them near the balcony in the window, where the prince of Persia and Ebn Thaher were. The manner in which all these were arranged, together with the favourite's throne, and the females who were on each side of her, formed a semicircle before them.

When those who had before been seated, had again, by the permission of Schemselnihar, who gave them a sign for that purpose, taken their places, the

Charming favourite fixed upon one of her women to sing. After employing a little time in tuning her lute, she sung a song, of which the sense of the words was as follows: When two lovers, who are dotingly fond of each other, are attached by a passion without bounds; when their hearts, although in two bodies, form but one; and when any obstacle opposes their mutual desires, they may, with tears in their eyes, say, "If we love each other, because each finds the other amiable, ought we to incur displeasure? Fate alone is to blame, not ourselves."

Schemselnihar evidently showed both by her eyes and actions, that she thought these words applicable to herself and the prince, and that he was no longer master of himself. He got up, and advancing towards the balustrade, which served him to lean upon, he contrived to catch the attention of one of the females who sung. And as she was not far from him, he said to her, "Attend to me, and do me the favour to accompany with your lute the song I am now going to sing to you." He then sung an air, the tender and impassioned words of which perfectly expressed the violence of his love. As soon as it was finished Schemselnihar, following his example, said to one of her women, "Attend to me also, and accompany my voice." She then sung in a manner that increased, to a still greater degree, the flame that burnt in the heart of the prince of Persia, who only answered her by another air still more tender than the one he sung before.

These two lovers having thus declared their mutual affection by their songs, Schemselnihar at length completely yielded to the strength of hers. She got up from her throne, almost forgetting what she did, and proceeded towards the door of the saloon. The prince, who was aware of her intention, instantly rose also, and hurried to meet her. They met at the very door, where they seized each other's hands, and embraced with so much transport, that they both fainted on the spot. They would have fallen to the ground, if the female attendants who followed Schemselnihar had not prevented them. They supported and led them to a sofa, and it was only by throwing some perfumed water over them, and applying various stimulants, that they returned to their senses.

The first thing Schemselnihar did as soon as they had recovered, was to look round on all sides, and not seeing Ebn Thaher, she eagerly inquired where he was. The fact was, Ebn Thaher had retired, out of respect to her, while the slaves were employed in attending their mistress; for he was really afraid, and not without reason, that some unfortunate consequence would arise from this adventure. As soon as he heard that Schemselnihar asked for him, he came forward and presented himself before her.

She seemed highly satisfied at the appearance of Ebn Thaher, and expressed her joy in these obliging terms:—"I know not by what means, Ebn Thaher, I can ever repay the obligations I am under to you; but for you I should never have become acquainted with the prince of Persia, nor have gained the affections of the most amiable being in the world. Be assured, however, that I shall not die ungrateful; and that my gratitude shall, if possible, equal the benefit I have received through your means." Ebn Thaher could only answer this flattering speech by an inclination of the head, and by wishing the favourite the attainment of everything she could desire.

Schemselnihar then turned towards the prince of Persia, who was seated by her side, and looking at him, though not without feeling confused after what had passed between them; "I cannot, sir," she said to him, "but be perfectly assured that you love me; and however strong your passion for me may be, you cannot, I think, doubt that mine is equally violent. Do not, however, let us delusively flatter ourselves; whatever union there may be between you

sentiments and mine, I can look forward only to pain, disappointment, and misery for each. And no remedy, alas, remains to befriend us in our misfortunes, but perfect constancy in love, entire submission to the will of Heaven, and patient expectation of whatever it may please to decree as our destiny." "Madam," replied the prince of Persia, "you would do me the greatest injustice in the world, if you could for a moment doubt the constancy and fidelity of my heart. My affection is so completely blended with my soul, that it forms in fact a part of my very existence; nay, I shall even preserve it beyond the grave. Neither misery, torments, nor obstacles of any kind, can ever be capable of lessening my love for you." At the conclusion of this speech, his tears flowed in abundance, nor could Schemselnihar restrain hers.

Ebn Thaher took this opportunity to speak to the favourite: "Madam," said he, "permit me to say that instead of thus remaining overwhelmed in misery, you ought rather to feel the greatest joy in finding yourselves so fortunately in each other's society. I really do not understand the motives for your grief. If it be so great now, what must you feel when necessity shall compel you to separate. But why do I say shall compel you: we have already been a long time here, and it is now necessary, as you must be aware, madam, for us to take our departure." "Alas!" replied Schemselnihar, "how cruel you are! Have not you, who so well know the cause of my tears, any pity for the unfortunate situation in which you see me? O! miserable destiny, why am I compelled to submit to so cruel a restriction as to be for ever unable to obtain and enjoy what absorbs my whole affection?"

As however, she was well persuaded that Ebn Thaher had said nothing but what was dictated by friendship, she was by no means angry at his speech; she even profited from it; for she directly made a sign to the slave, her confidant, who went out, and soon returned with a small collation of various fruits upon a silver table, which she placed between the favourite and the prince of Persia. Schemselnihar chose what she thought was the best, and presented it to the prince, entreating him to eat it for her sake. He took it, and instantly carried it to his mouth, taking care that the very part which had felt the pressure of her fingers should first touch his lips. The prince in his turn then presented something to Schemselnihar, who directly took and ate it in the same manner. Nor did she forget to invite Ebn Thaher to partake with them; but as he knew he was now staying longer than was perfectly safe, he would rather have returned home; and he ate therefore only through complaisance. As soon as the things were taken away, they brought some water in a vase of gold, and a silver basin, in which they both washed their hands at the same time. After this they returned to their seats, and then three of the ten black females brought each of them a cup, formed of beautiful rock crystal, and filled with the most exquisite wine, upon a golden waiter, which they placed before Schemselnihar, the prince of Persia, and Ebn Thaher.

In order to be more by themselves, Schemselnihar retained near her only the ten black slaves, and the other ten females who were skilled in music and singing. After she had dismissed all the other attendants, she took one of the cups, and holding it in her hand, she sung some of the most tender words, which one of the females accompanied with her lute. When this was finished, she drank the wine. She then took one of the other cups, and presenting it to the prince, requested him to drink it for love of her in the same manner she had done hers. He received it with the greatest transport of love and joy. But before he drank it, he sung in his turn an air, accompanied by the instrument of another female; and in singing it the tears fell in abundance from his eyes: the words, also, which he sung, expressed the idea that he himself was

ignorant whether it was the wine that he was drinking or his own tears. Schemselnihar then presented the third cup to Ebn Thaher, who thanked her for the honour and attention she showed him.

When this was over, the favourite took a lute from one of her slaves, and accompanied her own voice in so impassioned a manner, that she was absolutely carried beyond herself; and the prince of Persia, with his eyes intently fixed upon her, remained perfectly motionless, like one enchanted. In the midst of these scenes, the trusty slave of the favourite came in quite alarmed, and told her mistress that Mesrour and two other officers, together with many eunuchs who accompanied them, were at the door, and desired to speak to her as from the caliph. When the prince of Persia and Ebn Thaher heard what the slave said, they changed colour, and trembled as if their discovery had actually taken place; Schemselnihar, however, who perceived them, soon dispelled their fears.

After having endeavoured to quiet their alarm, she charged her confidential slave to go and keep Mesrour and the two officers of the caliph in conversation while she prepared herself to receive them, and said she would then send to her to introduce them. She directly ordered all the windows of the saloon to be shut, and the paintings on silk which were in the garden to be taken down; and after having again assured the prince and Ebn Thaher that they might remain there in perfect safety, she opened the door that led to the garden, went out, and shut it after her. In spite, however, of every assurance which she had given them that they were quite secure from discovery, they could not avoid feeling very much alarmed all the time they were alone.

As soon as Schemselnihar was in the garden with the women who attended her, she made them take away all the seats on which the females who had formed the concert had sat near the window, from whence the prince and Ebn Thaher had heard them. When she saw that everything was in the state she wished, she sat down on the silver throne, and then sent to inform her confidential slave that she might introduce the chief of the eunuchs and his two under-officers.

They appeared, followed by twenty black eunuchs, each having a scimitar by his side, and a large golden belt round his body, four fingers in breadth. As soon as they perceived the favourite, although they were at a considerable distance, they made a most profound reverence, which she returned them from her throne. When they approached nearer, she got up, and went towards Mesrour, who walked first. She asked him what intelligence he brought, to which he replied, "The Commander of the Faithful, madam, by whose order I am come, has charged me to say to you that he cannot live any longer without the pleasure of beholding you. He purposes, therefore, to pay you a visit this evening: and I am come in order to inform you of it, that you may prepare for his reception. He hopes, madam, that you will feel as much joy at receiving him, as he does impatience to be with you."

When the favourite observed that Mesrour had finished his speech, she prostrated herself on the ground, to show the submission with which she received the commands of the caliph. When she got up she said to him, "I beg you will inform the Commander of the Faithful, that it will ever be my glory to fulfil the commands of his majesty, and that his slave will endeavour to receive him with all the respect that is due to him." She at the same time gave orders to her confidential slave to make all the necessary preparations in the palace for the caliph's reception, by means of the black females, who were kept for this purpose. Then taking leave of the chief of the eunuchs, she said to him, "You must see that it will take some little time to make the necessary preparations; go, therefore, I beg of you, and arrange matters

so that the caliph may not be very impatient, and that he may not arrive so soon as to find us quite in confusion."

The chief of the eunuchs then retired with his attendants; and Schemselnihar returned to the saloon very much afflicted at the necessity she was under of sending the prince of Persia back sooner than she intended. She went to him with tears in her eyes, which very much increased the alarm of Ebn Thaher, who seemed to conjecture from it some unfortunate event. "I see, madam," said the prince to her, "that you come for the purpose of announcing to me that we are compelled to separate. Provided, however, that I have nothing further to dread, I trust that Heaven will grant me patience, which I have so much need of, to enable me to support your absence." "Alas, my love, my dear soul," cried the too tender Schemselnihar, interrupting him, "how happy do I find yours when I compare it with my more wretched fate. You doubtless suffer greatly from my absence, but that is your only grief; you can derive consolation from the hopes of seeing me again; but I, just Heaven, to what a painful task am I compelled! I am not only deprived of the enjoyment of the only being I love, but am obliged to bear the sight of one whom you have rendered hateful to me. Will not the caliph's arrival constantly bring to my recollection the necessity of your departure? And absorbed as I shall be continually with your dear image, how shall I be able to express to that prince any signs of joy at his presence, which was hitherto always accompanied on my part, as he often remarked, with pleasure sparkling in my eyes. When I address him, my mind will be distracted; and the least possible indulgence I shall grant to his affection, will plunge a poniard into my very soul. Can I possibly derive the least pleasure from his kind words and caresses? How dreadful the idea! Judge then, my prince, to what torments I shall be exposed when you have left me." The tears, which ran in streams from her eyes, and the convulsive sobs of her bosom, prevented her further utterance. The prince of Persia wished to make a reply, but he had not sufficient strength of mind. His own grief, added to what he saw his mistress suffer, took from him all power of speech.

Ebn Thaher, whose only object was to get out of the palace, was obliged to console them, and beg them to have a little patience. At this moment the confidential slave broke in upon them. "Madam," she cried, "you have no time to lose; the eunuchs are beginning to assemble, and you know the caliph, therefore, will very soon be here." "Oh, heavens!" exclaimed the favourite, "how cruel is the separation! Hasten," she cried to the slave, "and conduct them to the gallery, which on one side looks towards the garden, and on the other over the Tigris; and when night shall have thrown the greatest obscurity over the face of the earth, let them out of the gate that is on the back part of the palace, that they may retire in perfect safety." At these words she embraced the prince of Persia, without having the power of saying another word; and then went to meet the caliph with her mind in such a disordered state as may easily be imagined.

In the mean time the confidential slave conducted the prince and Ebn Thaher to the gallery where Schemselnihar had ordered her: as soon as she had introduced them into it, she left them there, and in going away she shut the doors after her; having first assured them that they had nothing to fear, and that she would come at the proper time and let them out.

The slave, however, was no sooner gone, than both the prince and Ebn Thaher forgot the assurances she had given them, that they had nothing to be alarmed at. They examined all round the gallery, and were extremely frightened when they found there was not a single place by which they could escape, in case the caliph or any of his officers should take it into their heads to come there.

A sudden light, which they saw through the blinds on the side towards the garden, induced them to go and examine from whence it came. It was, in fact, caused by the flames of a hundred flambeaux of white wax, which an equal number of young eunuchs carried in their hands. These eunuchs were followed by more than a hundred others, who were older, all of whom formed part of the guards, that were always on duty at the apartments of the females belonging to the caliph. They were dressed and armed with scimitars in the same way as those I have before mentioned. The caliph himself walked after these, between Mesrour, the chief of the eunuchs, who was on his right hand, and Vassif, the second in command, who was on his left.

Schemselnihar waited for the caliph at the entrance of one of the walks, accompanied by twenty very beautiful females, who wore necklaces and earrings, made of large diamonds, and whose heads were also profusely ornamented with the same materials. They all sung to the sound of instruments, and formed a most delightful concert. The favourite no sooner saw the caliph appear, than she advanced towards him, and prostrated herself at his feet. But at the very instant of doing it, she said to herself, "If your mournful eyes, O prince of Persia, were witness to what I am now compelled to do, you would be able to judge of the severity of my lot. It is before you alone that I wish thus to humble myself; my heart would not then feel the least repugnance."

The caliph was delighted to see Schemselnihar. "Rise, madam," he cried, as he approached her, "and come near to me. I have felt myself but ill at ease at having been deprived, for so long a time, of the pleasure of beholding you." Having thus spoken, he took her by the hand, and addressing the most kind and obliging things to her, he seated himself on the throne of silver, which she had ordered to be brought, as she did on a seat before him; and the other twenty females formed an entire circle round them, sitting down on other seats; while the hundred young eunuchs, who carried the flambeaux, dispersed themselves at certain distances from each other, all over the garden; and the caliph in the mean time enjoyed at his ease the freshness of the evening air.

When the caliph had sat down, he looked round him, and observed with great satisfaction that the garden was illuminated with a multitude of other lights besides those which the eunuchs carried. He took notice, however, that the saloon was shut up; at which he seemed surprised, and asked the reason of it. It was, in fact, done so on purpose to astonish him; for he had no sooner spoken, than all the windows at once suddenly opened, and he saw it lighted up, both within side and without, in a much more extensive and magnificent manner than he had ever done before. "Charming Schemselnihar," he cried at this sight, "I understand your meaning: you wish me to acknowledge that the night may be made as beautiful as the day; and after what I now see, I cannot deny it."

Let us now return to the prince of Persia and Ebn Thaher, whom we left shut up in the gallery. Although in that disagreeable situation, the latter could not help admiring everything that passed, and of which he was a spectator. "I am not a young man," he cried, "and have in the course of my life been witness to many beautiful sights; but I really think I never saw any spectacle so surprising, or grand, as this is. Nothing that has been related, even of enchanted palaces, at all equals the exhibitions we have now before our eyes. What a profusion of magnificence and riches!"

None of these brilliant objects, however, seemed to have any effect upon the prince of Persia; he derived not that pleasure from them which Ebn Thaher did. His eyes were only intent upon watching Schemselnihar; and the presence of the sultan plunged him into the greatest affliction. "Dear Ebn Thaher," he cried, "I wish to God I had a mind sufficiently at ease to be

interested, like yourself, in everything that is admirable around us. But I am, alas! in a very different state; and all these objects serve but to increase my torment. How can I possibly see the caliph alone with her I dote on, and not die in despair? Should an affection so tender and indelible as mine be disturbed by so powerful a rival? Heavens! how extraordinary and cruel is my destiny! Not an instant ago I thought myself the happiest and most fortunate lover in the world, and at this moment I feel a stroke on my heart, that will at last be the death of me. No, I cannot, my dear Ebn Thaher, resist it. My patience is worn out; my misfortune completely overwhelms me, and my courage sinks under it." In pronouncing these last words, he observed something going on in the garden, which obliged him to be silent, and give his attention.

The fact was, that the caliph had commanded one of the females, that was near, to take her lute and sing. The words she sung were very tender and impassioned; and the caliph being persuaded that she sung them by Schemselnihar's order, who had often given him similar proofs of her affection, interpreted them in favour of himself. But, at this moment, it was very far from the intention of Schemselnihar. She in her heart applied them to her dear Ali Ebn Becar, the prince of Persia; and the misery she felt at having, in his place, an object before her, whose presence she could not endure, took such an effect upon her that she fainted. She fell back in her chair, which had no arms to it, and would have fallen on the ground if some of her women had not quickly run to her assistance. They carried her away, and took her into the saloon.

Ebn Thaher, who was in the gallery, surprised by this accident, turned his head towards the prince of Persia, when, instead of seeing him leaning against the blinds, and looking out as well as himself, he was extremely astonished to find him stretched motionless at his feet. He judged by this of the strength of his love for Schemselnihar, and could not help wondering at this strange effect of sympathy, which distressed him the more on account of the place they were then in. However, he did all he could to recover the prince, but without success. Ebn Thaher was in this embarrassing situation, when the confidant of Schemselnihar opened the door of the gallery, and ran in, quite out of breath, and like one who did not know what course to pursue. "Come instantly," cried she, "that I may let you out. Everything here is in such confusion that I believe this is the last day we have to live." "Alas!" replied Ebn Thaher, in a tone which bespoke his grief, "how can we depart? Pray, come hither, and see what a state the prince of Persia is in." When the slave saw that he had fainted, she ran immediately to get some water, without losing time in conversation, and returned in a few moments.

At length the prince of Persia, after they had sprinkled water on his face, began to recover. When Ebn Thaher saw symptoms of returning life, he said to him, "Prince, we both run a great risk of losing our lives by remaining here any longer; make an effort, then, and let us fly as quick as possible." He was so weak that he could not get up without assistance. Ebn Thaher and the confidant gave him their hands, and, supporting him on each side, they got to a little iron gate, which opened on the Tigris. They went out by this gate, and proceeded to the edge of a small canal which communicated with the river. The confidential slave clapped her hands, and instantly a little boat appeared, rowed by one man, and came towards them. Ali Ebn Becar and his companion embarked in it, and the slave remained on the bank of the canal. As soon as the prince was seated in the boat, he stretched out one hand towards the palace, and placing the other on his heart, "Dear object of my soul," cried he, in a feeble voice, "receive from this hand the pledge of my faith, while with my other I assure thee that my heart will ever preserve the flame with which it now burns."

In the mean time the boatman rowed with all his strength, and the confidant walked on the bank of the canal to accompany the prince of Persia and Ebn Thaher, till they arrived in the current of the Tigris. Then, as she could not go any farther, she took her leave of them and retired.

The prince of Persia continued extremely weak: Ebn Thaher said all he could to console him, and exhorted him to take courage. "Remember," said he, "that when we disembark, we shall still have a long way to go before we arrive at my house; for to conduct you to yours, which is still much farther, at this hour, and in the state you now are, would, I think, be very imprudent. We might also run a risk of meeting the watch-guard." They at length got out of the boat, but the prince was so feeble that he could not walk, which very much increased Ebn Thaher's embarrassment. He recollected that he had a friend in the neighbourhood, and he with great difficulty dragged the prince thither. His friend received them very cordially, and when he had made them sit down, he asked them from whence they came at that late hour. Ebn Thaher replied, "I learned this evening that a man who owes me a considerable sum of money intended to set out on a very long journey; I lost no time, but went in search of him, and in my way I met this young lord whom you see, and to whom I am under a thousand obligations; as he knows my debtor, he did me the favour to accompany me. We had some difficulty to accomplish our purpose, and bring our gentleman to a right understanding of the business. However, at last we succeeded, and this is the reason of our having stayed so late with him. As we were returning, at a few steps from hence, this young lord, for whom I have the utmost regard, felt himself suddenly seized with illness, which induced me to take the liberty of knocking at your door. I flattered myself that you would have the goodness to do us the favour of giving us a lodging for this night."

The friend of Ebn Thaher easily swallowed this story, told them they were welcome, and offered the prince of Persia, whom he did not know, every assistance in his power. But Ebn Thaher taking upon himself to answer for the prince, said that his illness was of a nature only to require repose. His friend also understood by this speech that they both wanted rest. He therefore conducted them to an apartment, where he left them at liberty to lie down.

The prince of Persia no sooner dropped asleep than his repose was disturbed by the most distressing dreams. He thought he beheld Schemselnihar fainting at the feet of the caliph, which was little calculated to subdue his affliction. Ebn Thaher, who was excessively impatient to get to his own house, knowing that his family would be in the utmost distress, because he made it a rule never to sleep from home, got up and departed very early, after taking leave of his friend, who had risen by daybreak to go to early prayers. They at length arrived at Ebn Thaher's house, when the prince of Persia, who had exerted himself very much to walk so far, threw himself exhausted upon a sofa. As he was not in a state to go home, Ebn Thaher ordered an apartment to be prepared for him: and that none of his people might be uneasy about him, he sent to inform them where he was. In the mean time he begged the prince to endeavour to make his mind easy, and order everything about him as he pleased. "I accept with pleasure," replied the prince of Persia, "the obliging offers you make; but that I may not be any embarrassment to you, I entreat you to do everything as if I were not with you. I cannot think of staying here a moment, if my presence is to be any restraint upon you."

As soon as Ebn Thaher had time to recollect himself, he informed his family of everything that had passed in the palace of Schemselnihar, and finished his recital by returning thanks to God for having delivered him from such danger. The principal domestics belonging to the prince of Persia came to receive their

orders from him at Ebn Thaher's; and soon after several of his friends arrived, who had become acquainted with his indisposition. They passed the greatest part of the day with him: and although their conversation could not entirely banish the sorrowful reflections which occasioned his illness, yet it at least afforded him some relaxation.

Towards the close of the day he wished to take his leave of Ebn Thaher, but this faithful friend found him still so weak, that he made him remain till the following day. In the mean time, to dissipate his gloom, he gave him in the evening a concert of vocal and instrumental music; but this only served to recall to the prince's memory the one which he had enjoyed the preceding night, and only increased his grief instead of assuaging it, so that the next day his indisposition seemed to be augmented. Finding this to be the case, Ebn Thaher no longer opposed the prince's wish of returning to his own house. On reaching home, he represented to him in strong terms the necessity of making one great effort to overcome a passion, which could not terminate happily either for him or the favourite. "Ah! dear Ebn Thaher," cried the prince, "it is easy for you to give this advice: but how difficult is the task for me to follow it! I see and confess the importance of it, without being able to profit from it. I have already said it; the love I have for Schemselnihar will accompany me to the grave." When Ebn Thaher perceived that he could make no impression on the mind of the prince, he took his leave with the intention of retiring, but the prince prevented him. "Obliging Ebn Thaher," said he to him, "if I have declared to you that it is not in my power to follow your prudent counsel, I entreat you not to be angry with me, and desist on that account from giving me proofs of your friendship. You could not give me a stronger one than to inform me of the fate of my beloved Schemselnihar, should you hear any tidings of her. The uncertainty I am under respecting her situation, and the dreadful apprehensions I feel on account of her fainting, make me continue in the languid state for which you so much reproach me." "My lord," replied Ebn Thaher, "you may surely hope, that her fainting has not been productive of any bad consequences, and that her confidential slave will shortly come to acquaint me how the affair terminated. As soon as I myself know, I will not fail to come and communicate it to you."

Ebn Thaher left the prince with this hope, and returned home, where he expected all the rest of the day to see the confidant of Schemselnihar arrive, but in vain. She did not make her appearance even on the morrow. The uneasiness he felt to learn the state of the prince's health did not allow him to remain any longer without seeing him; and he went to him with the design of exhorting him to have patience. He found him on the bed, and quite as ill as ever; he was also surrounded by his friends and several physicians, who were exerting all their professional skill to endeavour to discover the cause of his disease. As soon as he perceived Ebn Thaher, he cast a smiling look on him, which expressed two things; one, that he was rejoiced to see him; the other, how deceived his physicians were in their conjectures on his disease, the cause of which they could not guess.

The physicians and the friends retired one after the other, so that Ebn Thaher remained alone with the patient. He approached his bed to inquire how he had been since he last saw him. "I own," replied the prince of Persia, "that my love, which every day acquires increased strength, and the uncertainty of the destiny of the lovely Schemselnihar heighten my disease every moment, and reduce me to a state which afflicts my friends, and utterly baffles the skill of the physicians. You little imagine," added he, "how much I suffer at seeing so many people who constantly importune me, and whom I cannot dismiss without incivility. You are the only one whose company affords

me any comfort ; but do not disguise anything from me, I conjure you. What news do you bring of Schemselnihar ? Have you seen her confidant ? What did she say to you ?" Ebn Thaher answered that he had not seen her : and he had no sooner communicated this sorrowful intelligence to the prince, than the tears came in his eyes ; he could make no reply, for his heart was full. " Prince," then resumed Ebn Thaher, " allow me to say that you are too ingenious in tormenting yourself. In the name of God, dry your tears ; some of your people might come in at this moment, and you are well aware how cautious you ought to be to conceal your sentiments, which might be discovered by that means." Whatever this judicious counsellor might urge, was ineffectual to stop the prince's tears, which he could not restrain. " Wise Ebn Thaher," cried he, when he had regained the power of speech, " I can prevent my tongue from revealing the secret of my heart, but I have no power over my tears, while I have so much reason to fear for Schemselnihar. If this adorable and only object of my desires were no longer in this world, I should not survive her one moment." " Do not harbour so afflicting a thought," replied Ebn Thaher ; " Schemselnihar still lives ; you must not doubt it. If she has not sent you any account of herself, it is probably because she has not been able to find an opportunity, and I hope this day will not pass without your hearing of her." After many other consoling speeches, he took his leave.

Ebn Thaher was scarcely returned to his house, when the confidant of Schemselnihar arrived. She had a sorrowful air, from which he conceived an unfavourable presage. He inquired after her mistress. " First," said she, " give me some intelligence of yourselves, for I was in great anxiety on your account, seeing you depart with the prince of Persia in such a state as he appeared to be." Ebn Thaher related to her all she wished to know ; and when he had concluded his narrative, the slave began hers. " If the prince of Persia," said she, " suffers on my mistress's account, she does not endure less pain for him. After I had quitted you," continued she, " I returned to the saloon, where I found Schemselnihar, who had not yet recovered from her fainting fit, notwithstanding all the remedies that had been applied. The caliph was seated next to her in the utmost grief. He inquired of all the women, and of me in particular, if we had any knowledge of the cause of her indisposition ; but we all kept the secret, and replied quite contrary to what we knew to be the fact. We were, however, all in tears to see her suffer so long, and we omitted nothing that we thought might relieve her. It was full midnight when she came to herself. The caliph, who had had the patience to wait for this moment, showed great joy, and asked Schemselnihar what could have occasioned this illness. As soon as she heard his voice, she made an effort to sit up ; and, having kissed his feet, before he had time to prevent her ; ' Sire,' said she, ' I ought to complain of Heaven for not suffering me to expire at the feet of your majesty, to convince you by that how sincerely I am penetrated by the sense of all your goodness to me.'

" ' I am well persuaded that you love me,' replied the caliph ; ' but I command you to take care of yourself for my sake ; you have probably made some exertion to-day which has been the cause of this indisposition ; you must be more careful, and I beg you to avoid a repetition of anything that may be injurious. I am happy to see you in a better state, and I advise you to pass the night here instead of returning to your apartment, lest the motion should be hurtful to you.' He then ordered some wine to be brought, of which he made her take a small quantity to give her strength, after which he took his leave of her, and retired to his chamber.

" As soon as the caliph was gone, my mistress made signs to me to draw near. She anxiously inquired after you. I assured her that you had long

since quitted the palace, and I set her mind at ease on that subject. I took care not to mention the fainting of the prince of Persia, for fear she should relapse into the same state from which we had with so much difficulty recovered her. But my precaution was useless, as you will shortly hear. 'O! prince,' cried she then, 'from this time I renounce all pleasures, so long as my eyes shall be deprived of the gratification of beholding thee, if I understand thine heart, I only follow thy example. Thou wilt not cease thy tears until thou hast rejoined me; and it is but just that I should weep and lament until thou art restored to my prayers.' On concluding these words, which she pronounced in a manner that denoted the violence of her love, she fainted a second time in my arms.

"My companions and I were a long while in restoring her to her senses again; at length life returned; I then said to her, 'Are you resolved, madam, to suffer yourself to die, and to make us die with you? I conjure you in the name of the prince of Persia, for whom you are so interested, to endeavour to preserve your life. Pray be persuaded, and make those efforts which you owe to yourself, to your love for the prince, and to our attachment to you.' 'I am much obliged to you,' returned she, 'for your care, your attention, and your advice. But, alas! how can they be serviceable to me? It is only in the bosom of the grave that we may expect a period to our torments.'

"One of my companions would fain have given a turn to these melancholy ideas by singing a little air to her lute; but she desired her to be silent, and ordered her with the rest to quit the room. She detained only me to spend the night with her. Heavens! what a night it was! she passed it in tears and lamentations, and calling continually on the name of the prince of Persia, she bewailed the cruelty of her fate which had destined her for the caliph, whom she could not love; and not to be united to the prince of Persia, of whom she was so passionately enamoured.

"The next day, as it was not convenient for her to remain in the saloon, I assisted to remove her into her own apartment, where she was no sooner arrived than all the physicians of the palace came to see her, by order of the caliph, and it was not long before he himself made his appearance. The remedies prescribed by the physicians for Schemselnihar had no effect, and the restraint she felt in the presence of the caliph only increased the disease. She has, however, enjoyed a little rest this night, and as soon as she awoke, she charged me to come in search of you to obtain some intelligence of the prince of Persia. 'I have already informed you of the state he is in,' replied Ebn Thaher, 'so return to your mistress, and assure her that the prince of Persia expected to hear from her with as much impatience as she could feel on his account. Exhort her above all to moderate and conquer her feelings, lest some word should escape her lips before the caliph, which might prove the destruction of us all.' 'As for me,' resumed the slave, 'I am in constant apprehension, from the little command she has over herself; I took the liberty of telling her what I thought on that subject, and I am persuaded she will not take it amiss if I speak to her on your part also.'"

Ebn Thaher, who had but just left the prince of Persia, did not judge it proper to return again so soon and neglect some important business which he found would engage him at home; he therefore did not go till the close of the day. The prince was alone, and was no better than in the morning. "Ebn Thaher," said he, when he saw him enter the room, "you have, no doubt, many friends; but these friends do not know your worth, with which I am better acquainted, by witnessing the zeal, the care, and the pains you take, when an opportunity offers of obliging them. I am quite confused at all you do for me, and it is done with so much friendship and affection, that I shall never be able to acquit myself towards you."

"Prince," replied Ebn Thaher, "let us drop that subject, I beg; I am not only ready to lose one of my eyes to preserve one of yours, but even to sacrifice my life for you; but this is not the business I am come upon; I come to tell you that Schemselnihar sent her confidential slave to me to inquire how you are, and at the same time to give you some information respecting her. You may imagine that I did not say anything but what must confirm her belief of the excess of your love for her mistress, and of the constancy with which you adore her." Ebn Thaher then gave him an exact detail of everything the slave had told him. The prince heard it with all the different emotions of fear, jealousy, tenderness, and compassion, which such a relation was likely to inspire, and made on each circumstance such reflections either of an afflicting or consoling nature as might proceed from so passionate a lover.

The conversation lasted so long, that the night being far advanced, the prince of Persia made Ebn Thaher remain at his house. The next morning, as this faithful friend was returning home, he saw a woman coming towards him, whom he soon recognised to be the confidential slave of Schemselnihar. When she came up to him, "My mistress," said she, "salutes you, and I come from her to beg you to deliver this letter to the prince of Persia." The friendly Ebn Thaher took the letter, and returned to the prince, accompanied by the confidant.

When they had got there, he begged her to remain a few minutes in the antechamber and wait for him. As soon as the prince saw him, he anxiously inquired what news he had to announce. "The best you can possibly wish," replied Ebn Thaher; "you are beloved as tenderly as you love. The confidant of Schemselnihar is in your antechamber; she brings you a letter from your mistress, and only waits your orders to present herself before you." "Let her come in," cried the prince, in a transport of joy; and saying this, he raised himself in his bed to receive her.

As the attendants of the prince had left the room when Ebn Thaher entered it, that he might be alone with their master, Ebn Thaher went to open the door himself and desire the confidant to come in. The prince recollected her, and received her in a very obliging manner. "My lord," said she, "I know all the pains you have suffered since I had the honour of conducting you to the boat, which waited to take you back; but I hope that the letter I bring you will contribute to your recovery." She then presented to him the letter; he took it, and after having kissed it several times, he opened it, and read the following words:—

"Schemselnihar to Ali Ebn Becar, Prince of Persia."

"The person who will deliver this letter to you will give you an account of me better than I can myself; for I know nothing since I ceased beholding you. Deprived of your presence, I seek to continue the illusion, and converse with you by means of these ill-formed lines, which afford me some pleasure, while I am prevented the happiness of speaking to you.

"Patience, they say, is the remedy for all evils; yet those I suffer are increased instead of relieved by it. Although your image is indelibly engraven on my heart, my eyes nevertheless wish again to behold the original; and their sight will forsake them if they remain deprived of that gratification for any length of time. Dare I flatter myself that yours experience the same impatience to see glances. Yes, I may; they have sufficiently proved it to me by their tender me? Happy would Schemselnihar be, happy would you be, prince, if my wishes, which are conformable to yours, were not opposed by insurmountable obstacles!

"These sentiments, which my fingers trace, and in expressing of which I feel such inconceivable pleasure, that I cannot repeat them too often, proceed from the bottom of my heart, from that incurable wound you have made in it; a

wound which I bless a thousand times, notwithstanding the cruel sufferings I endure in your absence. I should little heed all that opposes our love, were I only permitted to see you occasionally without restraint. You would then be mine, and what more could I desire?

"Do not imagine that my words convey more than I feel. Alas! whatever expressions I may use I shall still think much more than I can ever say. My eyes which never cease looking for you, and incessantly weep till they shall behold you again; my afflicted heart which seeks but you; my sighs which escape my lips whenever I think on you, and that is continually; my imagination which never reflects any object but my beloved prince; the complaints I utter to heaven of the rigour of my fate; in short, my melancholy, my uneasiness, my sufferings, from which I have had no respite since I lost sight of you, are all sufficient pledges of the truth of what I write.

"Am I not truly unfortunate to be born to love, love without indulging the hope of possessing the object of my affections? This distracting reflection overpowers me to such a degree, that I should die were I not persuaded that you love me. But this sweet consolation counteracts my despair, and attaches me to life. Tell me that you love me still. I will preserve your letter with precious care, I will read it a thousand times a day, and I shall then bear my sorrows with less impatience. I pray that heaven may no longer be irritated against us, and may grant us an opportunity of telling each other, without restraint, the tender affection we feel, and that we will never cease to love. Farewell.

"I salute Ebn Thaher, to whom we each have so many obligations."

The prince of Persia was not satisfied with reading this letter only once; he thought he had not bestowed sufficient attention on it; he read it again more deliberately, and while thus engaged he alternately uttered deep sighs and wept; he then would burst into transports of joy and tenderness, according to the different emotions he experienced from the contents of the letter. In short, he could not withdraw his eyes from the characters traced by so dear a hand, and he was going to read it a third time, when Ebn Thaher represented to him that the slave had no time to lose, and that he must prepare an answer. "Alas!" cried the prince, "how can I reply to so obliging and kind a letter? In what terms can I describe the state of my soul? My mind is agitated by a thousand distressing thoughts, and my sentiments are destroyed, before I have time to express them by others, which in their turn are erased as soon as formed. While my body is so much in unison with my mind, how shall I be able to hold the paper or form the letters?"

Thus saying, he drew from a little writing-case, which was near him, some paper, a cut cane, and an ink-horn; but before he began to write, he gave the letter of Schemselnihar to Ebn Thaher, and begged him to hold it open whilst he wrote, that by occasionally casting his eyes over it he might be better enabled to answer it. He commenced; but the tears, which flowed from his eyes on the paper, frequently obliged him to stop to allow them a free current. He at length finished his letter, and giving it to Ebn Thaher, "Do me the favour to read it," said he, "and see if the agitation my spirits are in has allowed me to write a proper answer." Ebn Thaher took it, and read as follows:—

"The Prince of Persia to Schemselnihar.

"I was plunged in the deepest affliction when your letter was delivered into my hands. At the sight of it alone I was transported with a joy which I cannot express; but on reading the lines, which your beautiful hand had traced, my eyes were sensible of greater pleasure than that which they lost when yours so suddenly closed on the evening you fell senseless at my rival's feet. The words contained in your obliging letter are so many luminous rays that enliven the

obscurity in which my soul was enveloped. They convince me how much you suffer for me, and also prove that you are not ignorant of what I endure for you, and thus console me in my pain. At one moment they cause my tears to flow in abundant streams, at another they inflame my heart with an unextinguishable fire, which supports it, and prevents my expiring with grief. I have not tasted one instant's repose since our too cruel separation. Your letter alone procured me some relief from my misery. I preserved an uninterrupted silence till it was placed in my hands, but that has restored speech to me. I was wrapped in the most profound melancholy, but that has inspired me with a joy which instantly proclaimed itself in my eyes and my countenance. My surprise at receiving so unmerited a favour was so great that I knew not how to express my gratitude. In short, after having kissed it many times as the precious pledge of your goodness, I perused and reperused it till I was quite lost in the excess of my happiness. You tell me to say that I love you still. Ah! had my love for you been less passionate, less tender than that which occupies my whole soul, could I have done otherwise than adore you after all the proofs you give me of so uncommon an affection? Yes, I love you, my dearest life, and shall to the end of my existence glory in the pure flame which you have kindled in my heart. I will never complain of the vivid fire which consumes it; and however rigorous may be the pains which your absence occasions, I will support them with constancy and firmness, encouraged by the hope of beholding you again. Would to God it were to-day, and that instead of sending you this letter I might be permitted to present myself before you, and assure you that I die for love of you. My tears prevent me from adding any more. Farewell."

Ebn Thaher could not read the last lines without shedding tears himself. He returned the letter to the prince, assuring him it needed no correction. The prince folded it up, and when he had sealed it: "I beg you will approach," said he, to the confidential slave, who had retired a little; "this is the answer I have written to the letter of your dear mistress. I entreat you to take it to her, and to salute her from me." The slave took the letter, and retired with Ebn Thaher, who after he had walked with her some way, left her and returned to his house, where he began to make some serious reflections on the love intrigue in which he found himself so unfortunately and deeply engaged. He considered that the prince of Persia and Schemselnihar, notwithstanding the strong interest they had in concealing their connexion, behaved with so little discretion that it could not long remain a secret. He drew from thence all the unfavourable conclusions which must naturally suggest themselves to a man of good sense. "If Schemselnihar," thought he, "were not a lady of such high rank, I would exert myself to the utmost of my abilities to make her and her lover happy, but as she is the favourite of the caliph, no one can aspire to obtain her with impunity. His anger will first fall on Schemselnihar; the prince will not escape with life, and I shall be involved in his misfortune. But I have my honour, my peace of mind, my family, and my property to take care of; I must, then, while it is in my power, endeavour to extricate myself from so perilous a situation."

His mind was occupied with thoughts of this nature for the whole of that day. The following morning he went to the prince of Persia, with the intention of making one last effort to induce him to conquer this unfortunate passion. He represented to him what he had before mentioned, to no effect; that he would do much better to exert all his courage to overcome this attachment to Schemselnihar, than to suffer himself to be led away to destruction by its means; that his love for her was of the most dangerous nature to himself, as his rival was so powerful. "In short, my lord," added he, "if you will take my advice, you will endeavour to overcome your affection, otherwise you run

the risk of causing the destruction of Schemselnihar, whose life ought to be dearer to you than your own. I give you this counsel as a friend, and some day you will thank me for it."

The prince listened to Ebn Thaher with evident impatience, but when he had concluded, he said, "Ebn Thaher, can I cease loving Schemselnihar, who returns my affection with so much tenderness? She does not hesitate to expose her life for me, and can you imagine that the care of preserving mine would occupy me a single moment? No; whatever misfortunes may be the consequence, I will love Schemselnihar to my latest breath."

Ebn Thaher, offended with the obstinacy of the prince, left him abruptly, and returned home, where he began to consider very seriously what course he should pursue.

While he was thus occupied, a jeweller, an intimate friend of his, came to see him. This jeweller had observed that the confidential slave of Schemselnihar had been with Ebn Thaher more frequently than usual, and that he had been almost incessantly with the prince of Persia, whose indisposition was known to every one, although the cause was not; all this had created some suspicions in the jeweller's mind. As Ebn Thaher appeared to be absorbed in thought, he supposed that some important affair occasioned it, and thinking he had hit on it, he asked him what business the slave of Schemselnihar had with him. Ebn Thaher, a little confused at this question, replied, that it was only for some trifling thing that she came to him so often. "You do not speak sincerely," resumed the jeweller, "and by your dissimulation you will make me suspect that this trifle is of a nature more important than I had at first supposed it."

Ebn Thaher, finding that his friend pressed him so closely, said, "It is true; this affair is of the utmost importance. I had determined to keep it a secret; but as I know you take a lively interest in everything that concerns me, I will intrust you with the truth rather than suffer you to make conclusions for which there is no foundation. I do not enjoin you to secrecy, for you will be sensible from what I am going to relate, how impossible it would be to keep such a promise." After this preface, he related to him the amours of Schemselnihar and the prince of Persia. "You are aware," added he, at the conclusion, "in what estimation I am held by the nobles and ladies of highest rank, both in the court and city. What a disgrace for me if this story were to become known! But what do I say? It would be absolute destruction to my whole family as well as to myself; this consideration embarrasses me the most; but I have resolved how to act. I owe it to my safety, and I must be firm. I am going, with the greatest diligence, to call in my debts, and satisfy those who are my creditors; and after I have secured all my property, I will retire to Balsora, where I will remain till the storm I see gathering over my head has passed away. The friendship I feel for Schemselnihar, and for the prince of Persia, makes me very anxious on their account; I pray God to make them sensible of the danger to which they expose themselves, and to preserve them. But if their luckless destiny condemns their attachment to be known to the caliph, I at least shall be sheltered from his resentment, for I do not suspect them of sufficient malice to entangle me in their misfortune. Their ingratitude would be of the blackest dye, if they acted thus: they would then repay with baseness the service I have done them, and the good advice I have given, particularly to the prince of Persia, who might still withdraw them from the precipice, if he were willing, and save his mistress as well as himself. It would be easy for him to leave Bagdad, as I shall; and absence would insensibly eradicate a passion which will only increase while he remains in this city."

The jeweller heard this recital from Ebn Thaher, with very great astonish-

ment. "What you have now told me," said he, "is indeed of great consequence. I cannot comprehend how Schemselnihar and the prince of Persia could be so imprudent as to give way to such a violent passion. Whatever inclination they might feel for each other, instead of yielding to its influence, they ought to have resisted it with firmness, and made a better use of their reason. Could they be blind to the dreadful consequences of their connexion? How sadly are they mistaken if they suppose it can remain secret! I foresee, as well as yourself, the fatal termination of this affair. But you are prudent and wise, and I entirely approve the resolution you have formed; it is only by putting it in execution that you can escape the direful events you so justly fear." After this conversation, the jeweller arose, and took his leave of Ebn Thaher; but before he left him, the latter entreated him by the friendship which united them, not to reveal to any one what he had related to him. "Be easy on that score," replied the jeweller; "I will keep the secret at the peril of my life."

Two days after this the jeweller happened to pass by the shop of Ebn Thaher, and observing that it was shut up, he concluded he had put in execution the design he had communicated to him. To be quite sure, however, he inquired of a neighbour, if he knew why it was not open. The neighbour replied that he knew no more than that Ebn Thaher had set off on a journey. This was all the jeweller required, and the first person he thought of was the prince of Persia. "Unhappy prince," thought he, "how grieved you will be to learn this intelligence! By what means will you now be able to hold any intercourse with Schemselnihar? I fear despair will put a period to your existence. I feel compassion for you, and must endeavour to replace the loss of so timid a friend."

The business which had led him out was not of immediate consequence; he therefore neglected that, and although he only knew the prince from having sold him some jewellery, he nevertheless went to his house. He requested one of the servants he met at the door, to tell his master that he wanted to speak to him on an affair of the greatest importance. The servant soon returned to the jeweller and introduced him into the apartment of the prince, whom he found reclining on a sofa, with his head on the cushion. The prince, recollecting that he had seen him before, got up to receive him and give him welcome; and after having begged him to sit down, he asked him if he could render him any service, or if he came on business which related to him. "Prince," replied the jeweller, "although I have not the honour to be much known to you, yet the zealous desire I have of serving you has made me take the liberty of coming to acquaint you of a circumstance which concerns you; I hope you will pardon this freedom, as it proceeds from a good intention."

After this preface the jeweller began his story, and proceeded thus: "Prince, you will allow me the honour of telling you that the conformity of our minds, together with some affairs we had to transact with each other, has given rise to a firm friendship which exists between Ebn Thaher and myself. I know his acquaintance with you, and that he has, till now, exerted himself to serve you to the utmost of his ability; this I learned from his own lips, for we never practise concealment with each other. I just now passed by his shop, and was surprised to find it shut up. I inquired the reason of one of his neighbours, who told me that Ebn Thaher had taken his leave of him and of the other neighbours two days since, at the same time offering them his services at Balsora, whither he said he was going on an affair of considerable importance. I was not thoroughly satisfied with this answer; and the interest I feel in whatever concerns him, induced me to come to ask you if you knew anything particular about this sudden departure."

At this speech, to which the jeweller had given that turn he thought most likely to forward his design, the prince of Persia changed colour, and looked at

the jeweller with an air which evidently proved how much he was afflicted at this intelligence. "What you tell me," said he, "astonishes me; I could not have met with a more mortifying occurrence." Yes," cried he, the tears flowing from his eyes, "I have no hope left, if what you tell me is true! Ebn Thaher, who was my only consolation and support, forsakes me! I no longer seek to live after so cruel a blow!"

The jeweller had heard enough to be fully convinced of the violence of the prince's love, with which Ebn Thaher had already acquainted him. Simple friendship does not express itself in such strong language; love alone is capable of inspiring sentiments so animated.

The prince remained for some minutes absorbed in the most distracting reflections. He at length raised his head, and addressing one of his attendants, "Go," said he, "to Ebn Thaher's house; speak to some of his servants, and inquire if it be true that he is set off for Balsora. Run there instantly, and return as quickly as possible, that I may learn what you have heard." While the servant was gone, the jeweller endeavoured to converse with the prince on indifferent subjects, but he seemed totally inattentive; his mind was lost in thought. Sometimes he could not persuade himself that Ebn Thaher was really gone; then he felt convinced of it, when he recollected the conversation he had held with his friend the last time he had seen him, and the abrupt manner in which he left him.

At length the servant of the prince returned, and said that he had spoken with one of the people belonging to Ebn Thaher, who assured him that he was no longer in Bagdad, and that he had set off two days since for Balsora. "As I was coming out of the house of Ebn Thaher," continued the servant, "a well-dressed female slave accosted me, and having asked me if I had not the honour of being one of your attendants, she said that she wanted to speak to you, and begged me at the same time to allow her to come with me. She is in the antechamber, and, I believe, has a letter to deliver from some person of consequence." The prince immediately desired that she might be admitted, not doubting that it was the confidential slave of Schemselnihar.

The jeweller knew her again from having met her sometimes at Ebn Thaher's, who told him who she was. She could not have arrived at a more seasonable time, to prevent the prince from giving way to despair. She saluted him, as he did in return. The jeweller had risen as soon as she entered, and had withdrawn a little to leave them at liberty to converse together. The slave, after having remained some time with the prince, took her leave and went away. She left him quite different from what he was before; his eyes appeared more sparkling and his countenance more cheerful, which led the jeweller to suppose that the good slave had been saying something favourable to his attachment.

The jeweller, having resumed his place near the prince, said to him, smiling, "I see, prince, you have some important affairs at the palace of the caliph." The prince, surprised and alarmed at this speech, replied, "What induces you to think that I have any affairs at the palace of the caliph?" "I conclude so," resumed the jeweller, "from the slave who has just left you." "And to whom do you suppose this slave belongs?" inquired the prince. "To Schemselnihar, the favourite of the caliph," replied the jeweller. "I know this slave," continued he, "and her mistress also, who has sometimes done me the honour of coming to my shop to buy jewellery. I know, moreover, that this slave is admitted into all the secrets of Schemselnihar; I have seen her for some days past continually walking about the streets with a pensive air, from which I imagine she is now concerned in something of consequence, which relates to her mistress."

These words of the jeweller confused the prince of Persia. "He would not talk to me thus," thought he, "if he did not suspect, or rather if he did not know my secret." He remained silent for some minutes, not knowing how to act. At length he spoke, and said to the jeweller, "You tell me some things which lead me to think you know still more than you say. It is very necessary to my peace of mind that I should know the whole; I entreat you, therefore, to conceal nothing from me."

The jeweller, who could not desire a better opportunity, then gave him an exact detail of the conversation he had had with Ebn Thaher; and thus let him know that he was apprised of the intercourse that subsisted between him and Schemselnihar; he did not omit telling him that Ebn Thaher, alarmed at the danger which his office of confidant placed him in, had imparted to him the design he had formed, of quitting Bagdad for Balsora, where he intended to remain until the storm which he dreaded, had passed over. "This he has put in execution," continued the jeweller, "but I am surprised how he could prevail on himself to abandon you in the state which he described you to be in. As for me, prince, I confess to you that I was moved with compassion for your sufferings, and I come to offer you my services; and if you will do me the honour to accept them, I promise to observe the same fidelity towards you, as Ebn Thaher has done, and engage moreover to continue more firm and constant. I am ready to sacrifice my life and honour in your service; and, that you may have no doubts of my sincerity, I swear by everything most sacred in our holy religion, to preserve your secret inviolably. Be assured then, prince, that in me you will find a friend equal to the one you have lost."

This speech afforded the prince of Persia great consolation, and reconciled him to the voluntary banishment of Ebn Thaher. "I feel great satisfaction," said he, "in finding in you so good a substitute for the loss I have suffered. I cannot sufficiently express how much I think myself indebted to you, and I trust that God will amply recompense your generosity. I accept, therefore, with great pleasure the kind offer you have made me. Should you suppose," continued the prince, "that Schemselnihar's confidential slave has just been talking to me of you? She told me that it was you, who advised Ebn Thaher to leave Bagdad. These were the very last words she said, as she left me, and she seemed thoroughly persuaded of their truth. She did you, however, great injustice; and after everything you have now informed me of, I have no doubt but she was completely deceived. "Prince," replied the jeweller, "I have had the honour to give you both a literal and a faithful narrative of the conversation that took place between Ebn Thaher and myself. It is true, that when he told me of his intention of retiring to Balsora, I did not oppose his design; I even told him I thought him both prudent and wise; but this ought not to prevent you from putting your whole confidence in me, for I am ready to afford you all my services, and to exert myself most warmly and indefatigably in your cause. If you think otherwise, and decline my interference, I will, nevertheless, as I have most solemnly sworn, religiously preserve your secret." "I have already told you," replied the prince, "that I place not the least confidence in anything the slave has said. It is her zeal only that has raised these suspicions in her mind, and which have not, in fact, the least foundation. You ought, therefore, like myself, to excuse her on that account."

They continued their conversation for some time longer, and consulted together about the best and most suitable means of keeping open a correspondence between the prince and Schemselnihar. The first thing they settled was, that it was necessary to undeceive the confidant, who was so unjustly prejudiced against the jeweller. The prince took upon himself the task of explaining this matter the first time she came to him, and also to desire her,

whenever she brought any more letters, or had any message from her mistress, to carry them directly to the jeweller. In fact, they thought it improper that she should make her appearance at the prince's house so often, because she might by those means perhaps cause a discovery of what it was so much the interest of all parties to conceal. The jeweller then got up, and after having again assured the prince he might place an entire confidence in him, took his leave.

As the jeweller was going from the prince of Persia's, he observed a letter in the street, which some one seemed to have dropped. As it was not sealed, he unfolded it, and found it written in the following terms :—

"Schemselnihar to the Prince of Persia."

"I am now about to inform you, by means of my slave, of a circumstance which gives me no less affliction than it will occasion you. By losing Ebn Thaher, we truly suffer a great deal, but do not let this, my dear prince, prevent you from taking care of yourself. If the friend in whom we trusted has abandoned us through a dread of the consequences, let us consider it as an evil we could not avoid ; we must, therefore, console ourselves under the misfortune. I own to you, that Ebn Thaher has forsaken us at a time when his presence and aid is most necessary ; but let us fortify ourselves with patience under this most unexpected event ; nor let our affection fail us even for an instant. Strengthen your mind against this disastrous event. Remember, we seldom obtain what we wish without difficulty. Do not then let this damp our courage ; let us hope that heaven will be favourable ; and after all our numerous sufferings, we shall at last arrive at the full and happy completion of our wishes. Farewell."

While the jeweller had been engaged with his visit to the prince of Persia, the confidant had had time to return to the palace, and inform her mistress of the unpleasant intelligence of Ebn Thaher's departure. Schemselnihar had in consequence immediately written the foregoing letter, and sent her slave back, to carry it to the prince without delay, and the confidant, as she went along, had accidentally dropped it.

The jeweller was much pleased at finding it, as it afforded him an excellent method of justifying himself in the mind of the confidant, and bringing the matter to the point he wished. As he finished reading it, he perceived the slave herself, who was looking about with great distress and anxiety to recover it. He directly folded it up and put it in his bosom, but the confidant having observed his motions, ran up to him. "Sir," said she, "I have dropped the letter which you had just now in your hand ; I beg you to have the goodness to return it me." The jeweller pretended not to hear her, and continued walking on till he got home, without answering a word ; he did not shut the door after him, that the confidant, who still followed him, might, if she pleased, come in. This she did not fail to do ; and when she had reached his apartment, she said to him, "Sir, the letter you have found can be of no use to you, and you would make no difficulty in giving it me again, if you knew from whom it came, and to whom it is addressed. Give me leave to tell you also that you do not act justly by detaining it."

Before he returned any answer to the slave, the jeweller made her sit down ; he then said to her, "Is it not true that the letter in question is from Schemselnihar, and that it is addressed to the prince of Persia ?" The slave, who did not expect this question, changed colour. "This inquiry seems to embarrass you," continued he, "but understand that indiscreet curiosity is not my motive for asking this ; I could have given you the letter in the street, but I wished to induce you to follow me here, because I am desirous of explaining my motives

to you. Tell me, is it just to impute a disastrous event to any one, who has not in the most distant manner contributed to it? This, however, is exactly what you did, when you told the prince of Persia that I advised Ebn Thaher to leave Bagdad for his own security. I will not, however, lose time in justifying myself to you; it is enough that the prince of Persia is fully persuaded of my innocence in this point. I will only say, that instead of having aided Ebn Thaher in his departure, I am extremely mortified at it; not so much through my friendship for him, as through compassion for the situation in which he left the prince, whose intercourse with Schemselnihar he made me acquainted with. As soon as I was certain that Ebn Thaher was no longer in Bagdad, I ran and presented myself to the prince, with whom you found me. I informed him of this news, and at the same time offered him the same services which Ebn Thaher had afforded him. I have succeeded in my design, and provided you place as much confidence in me as you did in Ebn Thaher, it will be your own fault if I am not equally useful. Give an account to your mistress of what I have now said to you, and assure her, that though I may lose my life by engaging in so dangerous an enterprise, I shall never repent having sacrificed myself for two lovers so worthy of each other."

The confidential slave listened to what the jeweller said with great satisfaction. She requested him to pardon her for the bad opinion she had entertained of him, which arose merely from the zeal she felt for Schemselnihar's interests. "I much rejoice," added she, "that the favourite and the prince of Persia have been so fortunate as to find in you so proper a person to supply the place of Ebn Thaher; and I will not fail to give my mistress a favourable account of the strong inclination you have evinced to serve her."

After the confidant had thus expressed the pleasure it afforded her to find the jeweller so disposed to be useful to Schemselnihar and the prince of Persia, he took the letter out of his bosom and gave it to her. "Take it," he cried, "and carry it immediately to the prince, and then come back this way, that I may see the answer which he sends. And do not also forget to give him an account of our conversation."

The slave took the letter and carried it to the prince of Persia, who answered it without any delay. She then returned to the jeweller's to show him the answer, which contained these words:—

"The Prince of Persia to Schemselnihar.

"Your dear letter has produced a great effect upon me; but yet not so great as I could wish. You endeavour to console me for the loss of Ebn Thaher. Alas! however sensible I may be of it, this is only the least part of the evils I endure. You know these evils; and you know that your presence can alone cure them. When, alas, will the period arrive in which I can enjoy that dear delight without the dread of being again deprived of it? How distant does it appear to me? Father, perhaps, we ought not to flatter ourselves that we shall ever meet again. You tell me to take care of myself. I will obey you, since I have made every inclination of my heart subservient to you. Farewell."

When he had read this letter, the jeweller returned it to the confidant, who as she was departing, said to him: "I am going, sir, to induce my mistress to place the same confidence in you, which she did in Ebn Thaher. To-morrow you will have some intelligence from me." And he saw her, in fact, arrive the very next day, with great satisfaction marked in her countenance. "The sight of you alone," said he, "proves to me that you found

Schemselnihar in the disposition of mind you wished." "It is true," she answered, "and you shall hear the manner in which I brought it about. I found her yesterday," continued the confidant, "waiting for me with the greatest impatience. I put the letter of the prince into her hand, and she read it, while her eyes were bathed in tears. As I perceived she was going to give herself up to her accustomed grief, 'Madam, said I, 'it is without doubt the departure of Ebn Thaher which so much afflicts you; but permit me to conjure you, in the name of God, not to alarm yourself any more on that subject. We have found another like himself, who has offered to engage in your service with equal zeal, and what is of more consequence, with greater courage!' I then mentioned you to her," continued the slave, "and told her the motives which induced you to go to the prince of Persia. In short, I assured her that you would ever preserve the secret intercourse between her and the prince inviolable, and that you were determined to aid their attachment with all your power. She appeared greatly consoled at this speech. 'What obligations,' she exclaimed, 'ought we to feel ourselves under to the excellent man you have mentioned! I wish to know him, to see him, to hear from his own lips what you have now told me; and to thank him for his almost unheard-of generosity towards persons who have not the slightest reason to expect him to interest himself in so fervent a manner. His sight will afford me pleasure, and I will omit nothing that I think will confirm him in his good opinions and intentions. Do not neglect to go to him to-morrow morning and bring him here.' You must, therefore, sir, if you please, take the trouble to go with me to her palace."

This speech of the confidant's very much embarrassed the jeweller. "Your mistress," he replied, "must permit me to say that she has not thought sufficiently of what she has required of me. The free access which Ebn Thaher had to the caliph gave him admission everywhere; and the officers and attendants, who knew him, suffered him to go backwards and forwards to the palace of Schemselnihar without molestation. But how dare I enter it! You must yourself see that the thing is impossible. I entreat you, therefore, to explain to Schemselnihar the reasons which ought to prevent me from giving her this satisfaction, and represent to her all the unpleasant consequences that might happen from it. And if she will consider the matter again in the slightest degree, she will easily see that she exposes me to a very great danger without the least use."

The confidential slave endeavoured to encourage the jeweller. "Do you suppose," she said, "that Schemselnihar is so regardless as to expose you, from whom she expects a continuance of the most important services, to the least danger, in ordering you to come to her? Recollect yourself, and you will find there is not even the appearance of danger. Both my lady and myself are too much interested in this affair to engage you in it without due consideration. You may therefore very safely trust me to conduct you; and after it is all finished, you will readily enough acknowledge that your alarms were without any foundation."

The jeweller yielded to the arguments of the confidant, and got up to follow her. In spite, however, of all the courage he picked himself upon possessing, his fears so far got the better of him, that he trembled from head to foot. "From the state which I perceive you are in," cried she, "I am sure you had better remain at home, and Schemselnihar pursue some other mode of seeing you: and I have no doubt, from the great desire she feels, that she will come and find you out herself. This being the case, sir, do not go out, for I am convinced it will not be long before you see her arrive. The confidant was not wrong in her conjectures, for she had no sooner informed Schemsel-

nihar of the fright of the jeweller, than the latter instantly made preparations to go to his house.

He received her with every mark of the most profound respect. As soon as she had sat down, for she was a little fatigued with her walk, she took off her veil, and discovered so much beauty to the eyes of the jeweller, that he instantly confessed in his own mind how excusable it was in the prince of Persia to have devoted his heart to the favourite of the caliph. She then accosted the jeweller in the kindest manner, and said to him, "I could not possibly become acquainted with the great interest you take in the welfare of the prince of Persia and myself, without instantly forming the design of thanking you in person; and I am truly grateful to Heaven for having so soon, and so well, supplied the great loss we suffered in Ebn Thaher."

Schemselnihar added many other obliging things in her speech to the jeweller, and then returned to her palace. The jeweller himself instantly went and gave the prince of Persia an account of this visit; who, when he saw him arrive, called out, "I have been waiting for you with the greatest impatience. The confidential slave has brought me a letter from her mistress, but this letter has afforded me no comfort. Although the amiable Schemselnihar may endeavour to give me every encouragement, yet I dare not indulge my hopes, and my patience is quite exhausted. I know not what plan to follow. The departure of Ebn Thaher has thrown me into despair. He was my support, and in losing him I have lost everything; for in the free access he had to Schemselnihar, I did flatter myself with some hopes."

At these words, which the prince uttered in a very expressive manner, and so rapidly that the jeweller had no opportunity of putting in a word before, he said, "No one, prince, can take a greater interest in your misfortunes than I do; and if you will have the patience to listen to me, you will find that I can afford you some comfort." At this speech the prince held his tongue, and was attentive. "I very clearly see," added the jeweller, "that the only means of satisfying you is to enable you to converse with and see Schemselnihar without any restraint. This is a satisfaction I wish to procure you, and I will set about it to-morrow. It will not, I trust, be necessary to expose you to the risk of going to the palace of Schemselnihar? you know from experience how dangerous a plan that is. I am acquainted with a much more proper place for this interview, and where you will both be in safety." When the jeweller had finished this speech, the prince embraced him with the greatest transport.

"You reanimate, by this delightful promise," he exclaimed, "an unfortunate lover, who felt himself already condemned to death. From what I already hear, I am sure I have fully repaired the loss of Ebn Thaher. Whatever you undertake will, I know, be done well, and I give myself entirely up to your direction."

After the prince had thanked the jeweller for the zeal he had shown in his service, the latter returned home, where the confidential slave of Schemselnihar came the next morning to seek him. He informed her that he had given the prince of Persia some hopes of seeing Schemselnihar very soon. "I am come expressly," she cried, "to concert some measures with you for that purpose. It appears to me," she added, "that this very house is well adapted for their meeting." "I should not have the least objection to their coming here," replied the jeweller, "but I think they will be much more at liberty in another house which I have, and which is inhabited by no one. I will immediately have it handsomely furnished to receive them." "This being the case," rejoined the slave, "nothing more remains to be done, but to get the favourite to agree to it. I will go and speak to her on the subject, and will return in a very short time and give you her answer."

It was not long before she came back, and she told the jeweller that Schemselnihar would not fail to be at the appointed place towards the close of the day. She at the same time put a purse into his hands, and told him it was to procure an excellent collation. The jeweller directly carried the slave to the house where the lovers were to meet, that she might know where it was, and be able to conduct her mistress thither; and as soon as they parted, he went to borrow from his friends some gold and silver plate, some carpets, some very rich cushions, and other furniture, with which he ornamented the house in the most magnificent manner. When he had got everything in readiness, he went to the prince of Persia.

Imagine to yourself the joy of the prince when the jeweller informed him that he was come for the purpose of conducting him to a house which was prepared on purpose for his and Schemselnihar's reception. This intelligence made him forget all his vexations, all his disappointments, and all his sufferings. He put on a most magnificent dress, and went out, without even one attendant, with the jeweller, who led him through many unfrequented streets to his house, in order that no one might observe them, where he introduced him, and where they remained in conversation till the arrival of Schemselnihar.

They did not wait a great while for this too-doting fair one. She arrived directly after prayers at sunset, accompanied by her confidant and two other slaves. It would be useless to attempt to describe the excess of joy these two lovers evinced at the sight of each other; the delineation is almost impossible. They sat down upon a sofa, and at first looked at each other without being able to utter a single word, so much were their minds absorbed in mutual contemplation. But no sooner was the use of speech returned than they made ample amends for their former silence. They expressed themselves in so tender and affecting a manner, that even the jeweller, the confidant, and the two slaves could not refrain from shedding tears. It was necessary, however, for the jeweller to dry his tears, and to think about the collation, which he set before them with his own hands. The lovers ate and drank but slightly; after which they returned to the sofa, and Schemselnihar asked the jeweller if he happened to have a lute or any other instrument. The jeweller, who had taken care to provide everything which he thought might afford them pleasure, immediately brought a lute. The favourite spent a few moments in tuning it, and then began to sing.

While Schemselnihar was thus delighting the prince of Persia by expressing her love for him in words which she composed at the moment, they suddenly heard a great noise, and a slave, whom the jeweller had brought with him, instantly rushed in, frightened to death, and said that some people were forcing the door: that he had demanded of them who it was, when, instead of returning any answer, they redoubled their blows. The jeweller, greatly alarmed, left Schemselnihar and the prince of Persia, to go and inform himself of the truth of this bad news. He went as far as the court, when, through the obscurity of the place, he observed a troop of men, armed with scimitars, who had already forced the door and were coming directly towards him. The jeweller got up close to the wall as quickly as possible, and without being observed, he saw them pass by, to the number of ten.

As he thought he could be of no use in assisting the prince of Persia and Schemselnihar, he contented himself with lamenting their sad situation, and took flight as fast as possible. He ran out of his own house, and went for safety to that of a neighbour, who had not yet retired for the night, not doubting that this unforeseen and violent attack was made by order of the caliph, who had by some means been informed of the place of appointment between the

favourite and the prince of Persia. The house to which he fled for safety was not so far distant but that he heard the noise they made at his own, and this noise continued till midnight. Then, as everything appeared to him to be silent, he requested his neighbour to lend him a sabre, and armed in this manner, he sallied forth. He went to the door of his own house, and entering the court, perceived with great alarm a man, who demanded who he was. He instantly recognised the voice of his slave. "How have you been able," cried the jeweller, "to escape being taken by the guard?" "Sir," replied the slave, "I concealed myself in the corner of the court, and I came out as soon as the noise had ceased. But it was not the guard that broke into your house; they were robbers, who for some days past have infested this quarter of the city, and pillaged almost every one. They have, without doubt, remarked that some rich furniture has been brought here, and this was certainly their object."

The jeweller thought the conjecture of his slave too probable. He examined the house, and found, in fact, that the robbers had taken away the beautiful furniture of the apartment in which he had received Schemselnihar and her lover, and had carried off all the gold and silver plate, not leaving an individual thing behind them. At this sight he was quite in despair. "Oh, heavens!" he exclaimed; "I am undone, without the chance of redress or recovery. What will my friends say? and what excuse can I make them when I shall inform them the thieves have broken open my house, and robbed me of everything they had so generously lent me? How can I ever compensate them for the loss they have suffered through me? Besides, what can have become of Schemselnihar and the prince of Persia? This affair will make a great noise, and it infallibly must reach the ears of the caliph. He will be informed of this assignation, and I shall be the victim of his rage." The slave who was very much attached to his master tried to console him. "With regard to Schemselnihar," he said, "there is no doubt but that the robbers would be content with despoiling her of her valuables, and you may be assured she will return to her palace with her slaves; and the same will probably be the fate of the prince of Persia. You have every reason, therefore, to hope that the caliph will remain in total ignorance of this adventure. As for the loss which your friends have suffered, it is a misfortune you cannot help, nor were able to avoid. They very well know that the robbers are here in great numbers, and that they have had the boldness to pillage, not only the houses I have mentioned to you, but many others belonging to the principal noblemen of the court; and they are not ignorant that, in spite of the orders which have been issued to seize them, not one of them has hitherto been taken, notwithstanding all the exertions and diligence that have been used. You will make them every recompense in returning to your friends the full value of the things you have been robbed of, and you will then still have, God be praised, a tolerable fortune remaining."

While they were waiting, till it was daylight, the jeweller made the slave mend the door of the house that had been forced, as well as he could. After this, he went back with his slave to that he commonly lived in, making the most melancholy reflections all the way he walked along. "Ebn Thaher," said he to himself, "has been wiser than I have; he foresaw this misfortune, into which I blindly ran headlong. Would to God I had never taken any part in an intrigue which may perhaps cost me my life."

It was hardly day, when the report of this house having been broken open and pillaged spread itself through the city, and was the cause of a great number of the jeweller's friends and neighbours assembling at his habitation, the most part of whom, under the pretext of expressing their sorrow for this accident,

only came to hear the account more at large. He did not omit to thank them for the kindness of their inquiries; and he had, at least, the consolation of finding that no one mentioned either the prince of Persia, or Schemselnihar, which led him to hope that they were returned home, or had retired to some place of safety.

When the jeweller was again alone, his people served up a repast; but he could not eat anything. It was now about mid day, when one of his slaves came and informed him that there was a man at the door, whom he did not know, who said he wanted to speak with him. As the jeweller did not wish to admit an entire stranger into his house, he got up and went to speak to him at the door. "Although you do not know me," said the man, "I am not unacquainted with you, and I am come to you upon a most important affair." At these words the jeweller requested him to come into the house. "By no means," replied the stranger; "you must, if you please, take the trouble to go with me to your other house." "How came you to know," answered the jeweller, "that I have any other house besides this!" "I am very well acquainted with that," said the stranger; "and therefore you have only to follow me, and fear nothing; I have something to communicate to you that will give you pleasure." The jeweller then went with him; but informed him by the way in what manner his house had been robbed, and that it was not in a state in which to receive any one.

When they had arrived opposite to the house, and the stranger saw that the door was half broken, he said to the jeweller, "I see indeed that you have spoken the truth; I will conduct you then to a place where we shall be better accommodated." Having said this, they continued walking on, nor did they stop during the remainder of the day. Fatigued with the distance they had come, vexed at seeing night so near at hand, and wondering at the silence which the stranger kept respecting the place they were going to, the jeweller began to lose all his patience, when they arrived at an open place, which led down to the Tigris. As soon as they were on the banks of that river they embarked in a small boat, and passed over to the other side. The stranger then conducted the jeweller down a long street, where he had never before been; and after passing through I know not how many unfrequented lanes, he stopped at a door, which he opened. He desired the jeweller to go in, shut the door after him, and fastened it with a large iron bar. He then conducted him into an apartment, where there were ten other men, who were not less strangers to the jeweller than the one who had brought him there.

These ten men received the jeweller without much ceremony. They desired him to sit down, which he did. He had indeed great occasion for a seat, for he was not only fatigued and out of breath from his long walk, but the alarm with which he was seized at finding himself with people apparently fully adequate to inspire it, was so great, that he was hardly able to stand. As they only waited for the chief before they went to supper, it was served up when he made his appearance. They first washed their hands, and compelled the jeweller to do the same; and also to sit down at table with them. After supper was over, they asked him if he was aware with whom he was conversing. The jeweller answered he was not, and did not even know either the quarter of the city, or the place he was in. "Relate to us, then," they said, "your adventure of last night, and do not conceal anything from us." The jeweller was much astonished at this speech, and answered, "You are probably, gentlemen, already acquainted with it." "True," replied they, "the young man and young lady, who were with you yesterday evening, have related it to us; but we wish nevertheless to know it from your own lips."

Nothing more was wanting to make the jeweller understand that he was now

speaking to the very robbers who had broken open and pillaged his house. "Gentlemen," said he, "I am in great distress about that young man and young lady; can you give me any information concerning them?" "Be in no fear," answered they, "on their account; they are in a place of safety, and are quite well." Having said this, they pointed out two small apartments to him, in which they assured him they were kept separate. "They informed us," added the strangers, "that you were the only person who were acquainted with their affairs, and interested about them. As soon, therefore, as we knew that, we took all possible care of them on your account. So far from having made use of the least violence towards them, we have, on the contrary, done them every service in our power, and no one has ever wished to treat them ill; we assure you also of the same treatment, and you may place the fullest confidence in us."

Encouraged by this speech, and delighted to find that Schemselnihar and the prince of Persia were in safety, at least with respect to their lives and persons, the jeweller endeavoured to engage the robbers still further in their service. He praised and flattered them, and returned them a thousand thanks. "I acknowledge, gentlemen," said he to them, "that I have not the honour of knowing you; but it is a very great happiness to me that you are not unacquainted with me, and I cannot sufficiently thank you for the gratification this acquaintance on your part has procured me. Not to mention a word of the great humanity and kindness of this action, I see very clearly, that it is only among men such as you that a secret can be faithfully kept, where there is any danger of a discovery to be dreaded; and if there be any enterprise of a more difficult nature than common, you well know how to carry it through, by your alacrity, your courage, and your intrepidity. Relying upon these qualifications, to which you have so just a claim, I shall make no difficulty in relating my history to you, and also that of the two persons whom you found at my house, with all the distinctness and truth you can require."

After the jeweller had taken all these precautions to interest the robbers about everything he was going to reveal that he thought might be of advantage, he gave them a complete detail, without omitting a single circumstance, of the attachment and adventures of the prince of Persia and Schemselnihar, from the very beginning till the meeting he had procured them at his house.

The robbers were in the greatest astonishment at what they heard. "What!" they cried, when the jeweller had concluded his narration, "is it possible that this young man is the illustrious Ali Ebn Becar, prince of Persia, and this lady the beautiful and celebrated Schemselnihar?" The jeweller swore that he had told them nothing but the strict and literal truth; and added, that they ought not to think it strange that persons of their rank were very unwilling to make themselves known.

Upon this assurance the robbers all went, one after the other, and threw themselves at the feet of Schemselnihar, and the prince of Persia, entreating them to grant them a pardon; and protesting, that nothing which had happened should have taken place, if they had known the rank of the guests before they had broken open the jeweller's house. "And we will now endeavour," they added, "to make some reparation for the fault we have committed." They then returned to the jeweller. "We are very sorry," said they to him, "that we are unable to restore everything we have taken from you; as some part of it is no longer at our disposal; we beg of you, therefore, to be satisfied with the plate and silver articles, which we will immediately return to you."

The jeweller thought himself very fortunate at the favour they, by these means, did him. When, therefore, the robbers had restored what they promised, they requested the prince of Persia and Schemselnihar to come, and informed

them, as well as the jeweller, that they were ready to conduct them back to a certain place, from whence each might return to his own house; but before they did this, they wished to engage each of them by an oath not to discover them. The prince of Persia, Schemselnihar, and the jeweller, all said they were ready to pledge their words; but if the robbers particularly wished it, they would swear solemnly to preserve the whole transaction a most profound secret. The robbers upon this, perfectly satisfied with their oath, went out with them.

As they were going along, the jeweller feeling much disturbed at not seeing either the confidant or the other two slaves, went up to Schemselnihar, and requested her to inform him if she knew what was become of them. "I know nothing about them," she replied; "all I can tell you is, that they carried us with them from your house, that we were conducted across the river, and at last led to the house where you found us."

This was all the conversation which the jeweller had with Schemselnihar; they then suffered themselves to be escorted by the robbers, together with the prince, and they soon came to the side of the river. The robbers immediately took a boat, embarked with them, and landed them on the opposite bank.

At the instant in which the prince of Persia, Schemselnihar, and the jeweller were getting on shore, they heard a great noise, caused by the horse patrol coming towards them, who arrived at the moment they were landed, and while the robbers were rowing back to the other side with all their strength.

The officer of the guard demanded of the prince, Schemselnihar, and the jeweller, where they were coming from at that late hour, and who they were. As they were all in a state of considerable alarm, and therefore fearful of saying anything that might lead them into difficulties, they remained silent. It was, however, absolutely necessary to make some answer; and thus the jeweller took upon himself, as his mind was not quite so disturbed. "Sir," he replied, "let me in the first place assure you that we are people of character who live in the city. The men who are in the boat, from whence we are just landed, are robbers, who last night broke open the house where we were. They despoiled it of everything, and carried us with them.—During the whole of this time we made use of every means in our power, by persuasion and entreaties, and have at last succeeded in obtaining our liberty, and in consequence of this, they brought us to this spot. Nay, they even did more, and restored to us a part of the plunder they had taken, and which we now have with us." He then showed to the officer the parcel of plate the robbers had returned to him.

The commander of the patrol was by no means satisfied with this answer of the jeweller. He went up both to him and the prince of Persia. "Tell me," said he to them, looking in their faces, "the strict truth; who is this lady? How came you acquainted with her, and in what quarter of the city do you live?"

These questions very much embarrassed them, and they knew not what answer to make. Schemselnihar, however, got over the difficulty. She took the officer aside, and no sooner spoke to him, than he got off his horse and showed her every mark of great respect and honour. He directly also ordered some of his attendants to bring two boats.

When these were come, the officer desired Schemselnihar to embark in one, and the prince and jeweller went in the other. Two of his attendants were also in each, with orders to conduct them wherever they wished to go. The two boats then began to steer a different course; but we will now only attend to that in which the prince of Persia and the jeweller were.

The prince, in order to save the persons whom the officer had ordered to conduct them home some trouble, told them he would take the jeweller home

with him, and informed them of the part of the city where he lived. Upon this information, the attendants rowed the boat towards the shore close to the caliph's palace. The prince of Persia and the jeweller, although they durst not discover it, were in the greatest possible alarm. Notwithstanding they had heard the order which the officer had given, they nevertheless were fully persuaded they were going to be conducted to the guard-house for the night, and that they should be brought before the caliph in the morning.

This was, however, by no means the intention of their conductors: for as soon as they had landed, as they were obliged to return to their party, they transferred them to an officer belonging to the caliph's guard, who sent two soldiers with them to attend them by land to the prince of Persia's house, which was at a considerable distance from the river. They at length arrived there, but so worn out with labour and fatigue, they could scarcely move.

In addition to this access of weariness, the prince of Persia felt so much afflicted at the unfortunate and unpleasant interruption he and Schemselnihar had experienced, and which seemed for ever to annihilate even the hope of another interview, that in sitting down on the sofa he absolutely fainted. While most of his people were employed in assisting to recover him, the rest surrounded the jeweller, and requested him to inform them what had happened to the prince, whose absence had occasioned them the greatest anxiety.

The jeweller, who took good care to discover nothing to them they ought not to know, told them that the adventure was a very extraordinary one; but that he had not at that time sufficient leisure to give them the relation, and that they would be of greater use in assisting the prince. The latter fortunately returned at this moment to his senses; and those persons, therefore, who had so recently asked the questions, went to a distance, and showed the greatest respect, and at the same time evinced much joy, that his fainting fit had lasted but a short time.

Although the prince of Persia had recovered his recollection, he remained in such a weak state that he could not open his lips for the purpose of speaking. He answered only by signs, even to his relations who spoke to him. He continued in the same situation the next morning when the jeweller took his leave of him. The prince answered him only by a motion of his eye; at the same moment he took him by the hand; and as he observed that he was encumbered with the bundle of plate which the robbers had returned to him, he made a sign to one of his attendants to take and carry it home for him.

His family had expected the return of the jeweller with the greatest impatience during the whole of the day he had gone out with the man who had called to inquire for him, and of whom they were entirely ignorant; and when the time in which he ought to have returned was elapsed, they were convinced some accident even worse than the robbery had happened to him. His wife, his children, and servants, were all in the greatest alarm, and were still in tears when he arrived. Their joy at seeing him was great for the moment, but it was soon accompanied with pain and regret at finding him so much altered in so short a time. The excessive fatigue of the preceding day, and having passed the whole of the night without sleep, and in the midst of alarms, were the causes of this change, and many of his people for the moment hardly knew him again. As he felt himself very much weakened, he remained two whole days at home without once stirring out; during which time he saw only his most intimate friends, to whom he had ordered free admission.

On the third day the jeweller, who felt his strength re-established, thought that a walk in the open air would assist his recovery. He went therefore to the shop of a rich merchant, with whom he had been upon a friendly footing for some length of time. As he got up to take his leave and go away, he per-

ceived a female, who made him a sign, and he instantly recognised her as the confidential slave of Schemselnihar. This sight affected him with such a mixture of joy and alarm that he went out of the shop without noticing her. She, however, followed him, as he was convinced she would, because the place they were then in was not proper for conversation. And as he walked rather quickly, the confidant could not overtake him, and therefore from time to time called out to him to stop. He heard her perfectly well, but after what had happened to him he did not choose to speak to her in public, through the dread of giving rise to any suspicion that he had any acquaintance with Schemselnihar; for it was very well known all over Bagdad that this slave belonged to the favourite, and that she employed her upon every occasion. He continued to walk at the same rate till he came to a mosque, which was but little frequented. Hither the slave followed him, and they had there an opportunity of a long conversation without interruption.

Both the jeweller and the confidant of Schemselnihar felt great pleasure in again seeing each other, after the singular adventure of the robbers, and the fear each was in for the other, not to mention the alarm they all were in on their own accounts. The jeweller wished the confidential slave to inform him in the first instance by what means she and the two slaves had been able to make their escape, and if she had gained any intelligence of Schemselnihar since he had seen her. The confidant herself, however, was so eager to learn what had happened to him since their unexpected separation, that he was obliged to satisfy her. "This," said he, when he finished his narration, "is all that you wished to know from me; now, therefore, I beg of you, inform me in your turn, what I before desired you."

"As soon as I saw the robbers make their appearance," said the confidant, "I took them for soldiers belonging to the caliph's guard; imagining that the caliph had been informed of the excursion of Schemselnihar, and that he had sent them with orders to slay us all. I therefore instantly ran up to the terrace on the top of your house, while the robbers went into the apartment where the prince and Schemselnihar were; the other two slaves also made haste to follow my example. We continued going on from the terrace of one house to another till we came to one belonging to some people of good character, who received us with great kindness, and with whom we passed the night.

"The next morning, after thanking the master of the house for the favour he had done us, we returned to Schemselnihar's palace. When we arrived, we were in the greatest confusion, and felt the more distressed, as we were entirely ignorant of the destiny of these two unfortunate lovers. The other female attendants of Schemselnihar were much surprised at seeing us return without their mistress. We told them what we had previously agreed among ourselves, that we had left her at the house of a lady who was one of her friends; and that she would send for us again, to accompany her back, when she intended to return. With this excuse they were quite satisfied.

"In the mean time I passed the day in the greatest uneasiness. When night came on, I opened the small private gate, and saw a boat upon the canal that branched off from the river, and terminated at the gate. I called out to the boatman and begged him to row on each side of the river, and look if he could not see a lady; and if he met with one to bring her over.

"We waited in expectation of his return till midnight, when the same boat came back with two other men in it, and a woman, who was lying down in the stern. When the boat reached the shore, the two men assisted the lady in getting up and landing. I immediately discovered her to be Schemselnihar; and my joy at seeing her again was greater than I can possibly express to you. I instantly gave her my hand to assist her in getting out of the boat; for it was

with difficulty that she supported herself. As soon as she was on shore she whispered in my ear, and in a tone which evinced her sufferings, desired me to go and get a purse containing a thousand pieces of gold, and give it to the two soldiers who had accompanied her. I then gave her in charge to the two slaves to help her along, and after desiring the soldiers to wait a moment, I ran for the purse and returned with it almost instantly. I gave it to them, paid the boatman, and then shut the gate.

"I soon overtook Schemselnihar, who had not yet reached her apartment. We lost no time in undressing and putting her to bed, where she continued all night in such a state that her soul seemed on the eve of quitting its habitation.

"The next day her other attendants expressed a great desire to see her; but I told them she had returned home much fatigued, and had the more need of repose to recruit her strength. In the mean time the other two slaves and myself afforded her all the assistance and comfort we could devise. At first she seemed determined not to eat anything, and we should have despaired of her life had we perceived that the wine we from time to time gave her did not avail much to support her. At length by means of repeated entreaties, and even prayers, we got her to eat something.

"As soon as I saw that she was able to speak without injury to herself, for she had hitherto done nothing but shed tears, mixed with sighs and groans, I requested her to do me the favour of informing me by what fortunate accident she escaped from the power of the robbers. 'Why dost thou ask me,' she replied with a profound sigh, 'to bring to my recollection a subject that causes me so much affliction? Would to God the robbers had taken my life instead of preserving me. My evils would then have been at an end; but now my sufferings will, I know, long continue to torment me.'

"'Madam,' I answered, 'I beg of you not to refuse me. You cannot be ignorant that the unhappy sometimes derive a degree of consolation from the relation even of their most painful adventures. What I request then will be of service to you, if you will have the goodness to comply.'

"'Listen then,' she said, 'to a narrative of circumstances, the most distressing that can possibly happen to any one so much in love as I am, and who thought herself almost at the completion of her wishes. When I saw the robbers enter, I concluded the very last moment of my existence was at hand, and that the prince of Persia was in equal danger. I did not indeed lament my own death, from the satisfaction I felt, that we should die together. Instead, however, of instantly falling upon us, and plunging their weapons into our hearts, as I fully expected, two of the robbers were ordered to guard us, while the others were engaged in packing up whatever they could find in the room where we were, and in the other apartments. When they had done this, and had taken all the plunder upon their shoulders, they went out and made us go with them.

"'While we were on the way, one of those who accompanied us demanded our names. I told him that I was a dancer. He asked the same question of the prince, who said that he was a citizen.

"'When we had arrived at their dwelling we experienced new alarms. They first collected round me, and after examining my dress, and the valuable jewels with which I was adorned, they seemed very much to doubt my rank.

"'A dancing girl,' said they, 'is not likely to be dressed like you. Tell us truly who you are.'

"'As they found I was not inclined to give them any answer, they put the same question to the prince of Persia. 'Inform us,' they cried, 'who you are. We see well enough that you are not a common person, as you wish us to believe by your former answer.' He however gave them no greater satisfaction than I had done. He only told them that he had come on a visit to a certain

jeweller, whose name he mentioned, in order to amuse himself, and that the house where they found us, belonged to him.

"I know that jeweller," cried one of the robbers, who seemed to have some authority among them; "and I am under some obligations to him, although he is not perhaps aware of it. I know also that he has another house. Tomorrow I will make it my business to bring him hither, but we will not release you till we know from him who you are. In the mean time be assured that no harm shall be done to you."

"The jeweller was brought there the next day, and as he thought to oblige us, and in fact he did so, he informed the robbers who we really were. They immediately came and begged my pardon, and I believe they did the same to the prince, who was in another apartment. They protested to me at the same time, that if they had known that the house where they discovered us belonged to the jeweller, they would not have broken it open. They then took us all three, and conducted us to the banks of the Tigris; they made us go on board a boat, by which we crossed the water; but at the very instant of landing, a party of the guard came up to us on horseback.

"I took the commander aside, told him my name, and also that on the evening before, as I was visiting one of my friends, the robbers met and stopped me, and then carried me with them, and that it was not till I had informed them who I was, that they would release me. That on my account also they set at liberty the two persons he then saw with me, because I assured them I knew who they were. The officer of the guard immediately alighted, as a mark of his respect; and after expressing his joy at being able to oblige me in anything, he ordered two boats to come to the shore, into one of which he put me and two of his people, whom you saw, and who escorted me hither. The prince of Persia and the jeweller embarked in the other with two more of his soldiers, who went with and conducted them safely home."

"I hope," added Schemselnihar, with her eyes swimming in tears, as she finished this account, "that no fresh misfortune has happened to them since our separation; and I firmly believe that the grief and distress of the prince is equal to mine. The jeweller, who has served us with so much zeal and affection, deserves at least to be recompensed for the loss he has sustained through his friendship for us; do not therefore fail to take to him to-morrow morning as from me, two purses with a thousand pieces of gold in each, and gain at the same time some intelligence from him concerning the prince of Persia."

"When my good mistress had concluded her story, I endeavoured, on her giving me this last order, to obtain some information of the prince of Persia, to persuade her to make use of every method to conquer her feelings after the danger she had just encountered, and from which she had escaped only as it were by a miracle. 'Make no reply,' she called out, 'but do as I command you.'

"I was therefore obliged to hold my tongue, and immediately set out to obey her orders. I first proceeded to your house, where I did not find you; and from the uncertainty whether I should meet with you at the place where they told me you were gone, I was on the point of going to the prince of Persia's, but was afraid to make the attempt. I left the two purses as I went past, with a person of my acquaintance. If you will wait here a little while for me, I will go and fetch them."

The confidential slave then departed, but returned to the mosque, where she had left the jeweller, almost directly. "Here," said she, giving him the two purses, "take these, and make a compensation to your friends for their losses."

"There is much more," replied the jeweller, "than is necessary for that purpose; but I dare not refuse the present, which so kind and generous a lady wishes to make to the humblest of her slaves. I beg you to assure her that I shall for

ever preserve the recollection of her kindness." He then made an agreement with the confidant, that she should come and inquire for him at the house where she at first met him, whenever she had anything to communicate from Schemselnihar, or wished to gain any intelligence of the prince of Persia. After this they separated.

The jeweller returned home very well satisfied, not only with the ample sum of money he had received for the purpose of making up the loss his friends had suffered, but also from the idea that he was sure no person in Bagdad knew that the prince of Persia and Schemselnihar had been discovered in his other house, which had been robbed. It is true, he had acquainted the robbers themselves with it, but he was tolerably secure of their secrecy from its being mutual. Besides, they, he thought, did not mix sufficiently with the world for him to fear any danger from them, even if they did divulge it. The next morning he saw those friends to whom he was under such obligations, and he had no difficulty in giving them perfect satisfaction; and after all, he had enough money remaining to furnish his other house again very properly. He did this, and sent some of his domestics to inhabit it. While thus employed, he quite forgot the danger from which he had so lately escaped; and in the evening he went to visit the prince of Persia.

The officers and attendants of the prince who received him, told him he had arrived very opportunely, for that the prince, since he left him, was in such a state as to alarm them for his life; and that they had not been able to get him to speak a single word. They introduced him into his chamber without making the least noise; and he found the prince lying in his bed, with his eyes shut, and in a state truly worthy of his compassion. He saluted him, took him by the hand, and exhorted him to keep up his spirits.

When the prince of Persia perceived that it was the jeweller who spoke to him, he opened his eyes, and gave him such a look as plainly evinced how much he was afflicted, and how much more he now suffered than when he first saw Schemselnihar. He pressed his hand, and said, though in the most feeble tone of voice, how much he felt himself obliged to him for the trouble he took in coming to see so unfortunate and wretched a being as himself.

"Talk not, I beseech you, prince," said the jeweller, "of the obligations you are under to me. I wish most earnestly that the good offices which I endeavour to do you, were attended with more success. Let us only think of your health. From the state you are now in, I fear you suffer yourself to be too much depressed, and that you do not take so much nourishment as is absolutely necessary."

The attendants, who were in waiting, seized this opportunity to inform the jeweller that they had tried every method in their power to induce him to eat something, but that all their efforts had proved ineffectual, and that the prince had taken nothing for a great length of time. This compelled the jeweller to request the prince of Persia to suffer his servants to bring some nourishment for him to take; and after much entreaty, he at length obtained his consent.

When the prince of Persia had eaten, through the persuasions of the jeweller, much more than he had hitherto done, he ordered his people to retire, that he might be alone with him; and after they were gone out, he addressed these words to him:—"Added to the misfortune which overwhelms me, I feel very great pain for the loss you have suffered from your regard to me; and it is but just that I should think of some means to recompense you: but in the first place, after requesting you most earnestly to pardon me, I entreat you to inform me if you have heard anything of Schemselnihar, after I was compelled to separate myself from her."

As the jeweller had before received the whole account from Schemselnihar's

confidential slave, he now related what he knew of her arrival at her own palace, and of the state she had been in from that moment, till she felt herself so much better as to be able to send her confidant to get some intelligence of him.

To this speech of the jeweller, the prince answered only by his sighs and tears. He then made an effort to get up; he called his people, and went himself to the room where he kept his valuables, and ordered it to be opened; he then made them take out many pieces of rich furniture and plate, and ordered them to be carried to the jeweller's.

The jeweller wished to decline accepting the present of the prince of Persia; but although he represented to him that Schemselnihar had already sent him much more than sufficient to replace everything that his friends had lost, the prince nevertheless would be obeyed. The only thing, therefore, the jeweller could do was to acknowledge how much he felt confused at his great liberality, and to assure him he could not be sufficiently thankful for his kindness. He then wished to take his leave, but the prince desired him to remain, and they passed the greatest part of the night in conversation.

The jeweller saw the prince again the next morning before he went away, when the latter made him sit down near him. "You know very well," said he, "that there must be an end to everything. The sole object and end of a lover is to obtain possession of her he loves, without restraint; if he once loses sight of this hope, it is certain that he can no longer wish to live. This, you must be well convinced, is the miserable situation in which I am. Twice when I have fancied myself at the very consummation of my wishes, at that very instant have I been torn from the object of my affections in the most cruel manner. I have now, therefore, only to think of death. I would myself be the cause of its immediate presence, but that my religion prevents my becoming a self-murderer. I feel, however, that I have no occasion to hasten its approach, because I am well convinced I shall not have long to expect it." With these words he concluded his speech, and then gave full scope to his tears, nor did he endeavour to suppress his sighs and his lamentations.

The jeweller, who knew not what better method to pursue to lead his attention from this hopeless and despairing train of thinking, than by recalling Schemselnihar to his recollection, and holding out some slight ray of hope, told him that he was afraid the confidant was already come; and it would not, therefore, be right that he should lose any time in going home. "I permit you to go," said the prince, "but if you see her, I entreat you to urge her to assure Schemselnihar that if I die, as I expect will very soon be the case, I shall adore her with my last breath, nor will my affection cease even in the tomb.

The jeweller then returned home, and remained there, in hopes that the slave would soon make her appearance. She, in fact, arrived a few hours after, but bathed in tears and in the greatest disorder. Greatly alarmed at seeing her in this condition, the jeweller eagerly inquired what was the matter.

"We are all undone," cried she; "Schemselnihar, the prince of Persia, you, myself, every one of us is lost. Listen to the terrible news I learnt yesterday when I left you and returned to the palace.

"Schemselnihar had ordered one of the two slaves who were with us at your house to be punished for some fault or other. Enraged at this ill-treatment, this slave, finding a door of the palace open, ran out, and we have no doubt but that she went and told everything to one of the eunuchs of our guard, who has afforded her a retreat.

"Nor is this all; the other slave, her companion, has also fled, and has taken refuge in the palace of the caliph, to whom, we have every reason to believe, she has revealed all she knew; and what confirms this opinion is, that

the caliph sent this morning twenty eunuchs, to bring Schemselnihar to his palace. I found the means to steal away, and to come and give you information of all this. I know not what has passed, but I conjecture nothing good. Whatever it may be, I entreat you to be quite secret."

The confidant then added that she thought it would be proper to go, without losing a moment, and find the prince of Persia, and to inform him of the whole affair, that he might hold himself in readiness for any turn the event might take, and also that he might be true and faithful to the common cause. She then went away, without even waiting for an answer.

And what indeed could the jeweller have answered in the state this speech put him in! He remained motionless, like a person stunned by a blow. He was, nevertheless, aware that the business required decisive and prompt measures. He therefore made all the haste he could to the prince of Persia's, and as soon as he saw him, he accosted him in a way that instantly showed he was the bearer of bad news. "Prince," he cried, "arm yourself with patience, constancy, and courage; prepare for an attack, the most dreadful you have ever encountered."

"Tell me," exclaimed the prince, "in two words, what has happened, and do not thus keep me in suspense. I am ready to die, if it be necessary."

The jeweller then related to him everything he had heard from the confidential slave. "You see," added he, "that your destruction is inevitable. Get up, then, and endeavour instantly to save yourself. The time is precious. You ought not to expose yourself to the rage of the caliph, still less to confess anything, although you should be in the midst of torments."

Very little more would at this moment have actually destroyed the prince, so much was he already broken down by affliction, sorrow, and terror. He at length recollected himself, and inquired of the jeweller what plan he advised him to pursue in so critical a conjuncture, and when he had only an instant to take advantage of it. "There is nothing to be done," replied the jeweller, "but to get on horseback as soon as possible, take the road to Anbar (a town upon the Tigris, about twenty leagues below Bagdad), and endeavour to arrive there before daylight to-morrow. Let as many of your people accompany you as you think necessary, and some good horses, and suffer me to save myself with you."

The prince of Persia, who knew of no better method to pursue, gave orders to have prepared barely as much as was necessary for the journey, carried some money and jewels with him, and after taking leave of his mother, set out, and hastened as much as possible to get at a distance from Bagdad, in company with the jeweller and the attendants he had chosen. They travelled the rest of the day, and most of the following night, without making any stop on the road till about two or three hours before day, when the fatigue of so long a journey, and the absolute inability of their horses to proceed, compelled them to alight and take some little repose.

They had hardly had time to breathe before they were attacked by a considerable troop of robbers. They defended themselves for some time with the greatest courage, till all the attendants of the prince were killed. The prince and jeweller laid down their arms, and yielded at discretion. The robbers gave them their lives, and after taking their horses and baggage, they rifled and even stripped their persons, and then retiring with their plunder, left them in the same place.

The robbers were no sooner at some distance than the prince said to the jeweller, who was in the utmost distress, "Well, what think you of our late adventures, and the state we are now left in? Do you not rather wish that I had remained at Bagdad, waiting there for my death, in what manner soever it

might have been inflicted?" "Prince," replied the jeweller, "we must submit to the decrees of the Almighty. It is his will that we should suffer affliction upon affliction. Our business is not to murmur, but to receive everything, whether good or evil, from his hands with absolute submission. Let us not, however, stop here, but proceed, and endeavour to find out some place where we shall be able to obtain relief under our misfortune."

"Let me alone," cried the prince of Persia, "and suffer me to end my days in this place; for of what consequence is it where I breathe my last? Perhaps, at the very instant we are now speaking, Schemselnihar is herself no more; and it is neither my wish nor even in my power to live a moment after her." The jeweller at length, with much entreaty, persuaded him to move. They walked on for a long time, and at last came to a mosque, which they found open. They went in, and passed the rest of the night there.

At daybreak only one person came into the mosque. He said his prayers, and when he had finished them, as he was going out, he perceived the prince of Persia and the jeweller, who were seated in one corner. He went up to them, and saluted them with great civility. "You seem to me," he said to them, "if I may judge from your appearance, to be strangers." The jeweller, who took upon himself to speak, answered, "You are not wrong in your supposition. Last night, in coming along the road from Bagdad, we were robbed, as you may conjecture from the state we are in; and we have great need of assistance, but know not to whom to apply." "If you will take the trouble," replied the stranger, "to come to my house, I will very readily give you all the aid in my power."

On hearing this obliging offer, the jeweller turned towards the prince of Persia, and whispered in his ear that he thought this man did not know either of them, but that they had some reason to think it possible another might come who would recognise them. "We ought not, therefore," said he, "to refuse the favour which this good man does us." "You are master," replied the prince; "I agree to everything you wish."

As the stranger saw the prince and the jeweller consulting together, he thought that they made some difficulty in accepting the proposal he had made them. He asked, therefore, on what they had determined. "We are ready to follow you," replied the jeweller; "but what affords us the greatest distress is, that we are almost naked, and are therefore ashamed to appear in this condition." Fortunately, however, the man had sufficient clothes about him to be able to bestow enough on them to cover them on their way to his house, and they were no sooner arrived, than their host ordered some clothes to be brought for each of them; and as he naturally imagined that they were greatly in want of food, and would also be much more at ease by themselves, he sent a female slave with a variety of dishes. They scarcely, however, touched anything, particularly the prince, who was reduced to such a languid state, and was so worn out, that the jeweller felt considerably alarmed for his life.

Their host visited them several times during the day, but he left them early in the evening, as he knew they stood in great need of repose. The jeweller, however, was obliged, almost immediately, to call him again to help him in attending on the prince of Persia, who, he thought, was very near dying. He perceived that his respiration was difficult and rapid, and from this he judged that he had only a few moments to live. He went up to him, when the prince said, "It is, as you must perceive, all over with me; and I am well satisfied that you should be a witness to the last sigh I shall ever breathe; I resign my life with much satisfaction, nor need I inform you why I do so. You know it. All the regret I feel is, that I do not breathe my last in the arms of my dearest mother, who has ever shown the tenderest affection for me, and for whom I

trust my respect has ever been such as was proper. She will suffer much from not having the melancholy consolation of closing my eyes, and even of burying me with her own hands. Tell her, I beg of you, the pain I suffer, and request her, as from me, to have my body conveyed to Bagdad, that she may water my grave with her tears, and may afford me the benefit of her prayers." He did not forget the master of the house where he was, and thanked him for the generous reception he had given him; and after requesting that his body might be preserved in his house till they came to bury it, he expired.

The day after the death of the prince of Persia, the jeweller took advantage of a large caravan, which happened at that time to be going to Bagdad, where he arrived in safety. He immediately went to his own house, and having changed his dress, he proceeded to that of the deceased prince of Persia, where they were all much alarmed at not seeing the prince himself come back with him. He desired the attendants to inform the prince's mother that he wished to speak to her, and it was not long before they introduced him into a hall, where she was surrounded by many of her females. "Madam," said the jeweller, on entering, but in a tone and manner that evidently proved he was the messenger of ill news, "may God preserve you, and heap abundance of his favours upon you. You are not ignorant that the Almighty disposes of us as he pleases."

The lady gave the jeweller no time to say more. "Ah," she exclaimed, "you come to announce the death of my son!" She instantly uttered the most melancholy cries, which, together with those made by her women, renewed the grief, and made the tears of the jeweller flow afresh. She continued to suffer these torments, and remained a long time overcome by affliction before she would permit the jeweller to go on with what he had to say. She at length suppressed for a time her lamentations and tears, and begged him to continue his account, and not to conceal any circumstance of this melancholy separation. He satisfied her; and when he had concluded, she asked him if the prince her son had not charged him with anything in particular to say to her, when he was at the extremity of his life. He assured her that he only expressed the greatest regret at breathing his last at a distance from her, and that the only thing he wished was, that she would take care and have his body brought to Bagdad. Early, therefore, the next morning, she set out, accompanied by all her women, and a considerable part of her slaves.

When the jeweller, who had been detained by the mother of the prince of Persia, had seen her take her departure, he returned home in the most melancholy state of mind, his eyes cast down, and himself deeply regretting the death of so accomplished and amiable a prince in the very flower of his age.

As he was walking along, meditating thus within himself, a woman came up and stopped directly before him. He lifted his eyes and perceived the confidential slave of Schemselnihar, dressed in mourning and her eyes bathed in tears. This sight renewed his affliction to a great degree, and without even opening his lips to speak to her, he continued walking on till he came to his own house, to which the confidant followed him, and entered at the same time.

They both sat down, and the jeweller began the conversation by asking her, sighing deeply at the same time, if she had already been informed of the death of the prince of Persia, and if it was for him she wept. "Alas! no," she answered: "is then this charming prince dead? He has not indeed long survived his adorable Schemselnihar. Lovely spirits," added she, addressing the departed lovers, "in whatever place ye may be, ye are now sufficiently satisfied in being able for the future to love each other without any obstacle. Your bodies were an invincible hindrance to your wishes, and heaven has only freed you from them to enable you to be united in soul."

The jeweller, who was hitherto ignorant of the death of Schemselnihar, and who had not as yet attended to the circumstance of the confidant's being in mourning, felt an additional pang when he learnt this intelligence. "Schemselnihar dead too!" he exclaimed. "Is she no more?" "Such indeed is her fate," replied her slave, renewing her tears. "It is for her that I am in mourning. The circumstances attending her death are singular, and it is proper that you should be made acquainted with them. But previous to my giving you a narrative of this I beg of you to inform me of everything relative to the death of the prince of Persia, whose loss I shall continue all my life to lament, as well as that of my dear and amiable mistress Schemselnihar."

The jeweller satisfied her in every particular she wished to know, and as soon as he had finished his account the confidant went on as follows: "I have already told you how the caliph sent for Schemselnihar to his own palace. It was true, as we had reason to believe, that the caliph had been informed of the attachment and meeting between Schemselnihar and the prince of Persia, by the two slaves, whom he had separately questioned. You may already perhaps imagine that he was in the greatest rage with the favourite; and that he showed strong marks of jealousy and revenge against the prince of Persia. By no means. He thought not for an instant about him. He only pitied Schemselnihar. Nay, he attributed, as it is thought, what had happened only to himself, and to the permission which he had given her to go freely about the city, unaccompanied by any eunuchs. At least, we cannot form any other conjecture from the extraordinary manner in which he conducted himself towards her from first to last,—as you shall hear.

"The caliph received her with an open countenance, and when he perceived the traces of that grief with which she was overwhelmed, but which nevertheless did not in the least diminish her beauty, for she appeared before him without any symptoms either of surprise or fear, 'Schemselnihar,' said he, 'I cannot bear that you should appear before me with a countenance so strongly impressed by sorrow. You know with what ardour I have always loved you; you must be convinced of its sincerity by all the proofs I have given you of it. I am not changed, for I still love you more than ever. You have some enemies, and these enemies have made some ill reports of the manner in which you conduct yourself; everything, however, that they can say of you has not made the least impression upon my mind. Drive then away this melancholy, and dispose yourself to entertain me this evening as you were wont to do.' He continued to say many other obliging things to her, and then conducted her into a magnificent apartment near his own, where he requested her to wait for him.

"The wretched Schemselnihar was sensibly affected at so many proofs, of the caliph's concern for her person: but the more she felt herself under obligations to him, the more was her bosom penetrated with grief at being separated, perhaps for ever, from the prince, without whom she was convinced she could not exist.

"This interview between the caliph and Schemselnihar," continued the confidant, "took place while I was coming to speak to you; and I learnt the particulars of it from my companions who were present. As soon, however, as I left you, I hastened back to Schemselnihar, whom I found in the apartment I have mentioned; and as she was very sure I was come from your house, she desired me to approach her; and without being overheard by any one, she said to me, 'I am much obliged to you for the service you have just now rendered me; I feel that it will be the last.' This was all she uttered; and I was not in a place where I could say anything even by way of consolation.

"The caliph came in the evening, accompanied by the sound of instruments,

which were touched by the females belonging to the favourite, when a collation was instantly served up. He took her by the hand and made her sit near him upon a sofa. To comply with this action had such a violent effect upon her feelings, that in a few moments after we saw her expire. She was in fact hardly seated before she fell backwards. The caliph thought that she had only fainted, nor had we at first any other idea. We gave her every assistance in our power ; but she never breathed again.

"The caliph honoured her with his tears, which he was unable to restrain ; and before he retired to his apartment he gave orders that all the musical instruments should be destroyed, which was accordingly done. I remained near the body the whole night, and washed and prepared it for burial with my own hands, almost bathing it with my tears. It was the next day interred, by the command of the caliph, in a magnificent tomb, which he had before ordered to be built, in a spot that Schemselnihar had herself chosen. And since," added the slave, "you have told me the body of the prince of Persia is to be brought to Bagdad, I am determined that it shall be placed in the same tomb with that of the favourite."

The jeweller was very much astonished at this resolution of the confidant. "You do not surely recollect," said he, "that the caliph will never suffer it." "You may believe the thing impossible," replied she, "but I assure you it is not. And you will agree with me when I have informed you that the caliph has given their freedom to all the slaves that belonged to Schemselnihar, with a pension to each of them sufficient to support themselves ; and that he has moreover appointed me to take care of and watch her tomb, with a considerable salary both for its repair and my subsistence. Besides, the caliph, who is not ignorant of the mutual attachment of Schemselnihar and the prince of Persia, as I have already told you, and who is not now offended or hurt at it, will never have any objection to it." In answer to this the jeweller had nothing to say ; he only requested the confidant to conduct him to the tomb, that he might offer up his prayers there. When he arrived he was greatly surprised at seeing a crowd of people of both sexes, who had collected there from all parts of Bagdad. He could not even get near it ; and could only pray at some distance. When he had finished his prayers, he said to the confidant, in a satisfactory tone of voice, "I do not now think it impossible to accomplish what you so properly planned. We have only to make known the various facts we are acquainted with concerning the favourite and the prince of Persia, and particularly the death of the latter, which took place almost at the same instant with that of Schemselnihar." Before his body arrived, all Bagdad agreed in demanding that they should not be separated in the grave. The scheme succeeded, and on the day in which it was known the body would arrive, a multitude of people went out even twenty miles to meet it.

The confidant waited at the gate of the city, where she presented herself before the mother of the prince of Persia, and requested her, in the name of all the inhabitants who so ardently desired it, to allow the bodies of the two lovers, whose hearts formed but one from the commencement of their attachment to the last moment of their lives, to be united in one tomb. The lady agreed to it, and the body was carried to the tomb of Schemselnihar, an immense number of people of all ranks following it, and then placed by her side. From that time all the inhabitants of Bagdad, and even strangers from all parts of the world where Mussulmen are known, have never ceased from feeling a great veneration for that tomb, and going to offer up their prayers at its foot.

"This, sire," said Scheherazadè in this place, "is what I had to relate to your majesty concerning the amours of the beautiful Schemselnihar, the favourite

of the caliph Haroun Alraschid, and the amiable Ali Ebn Decar, prince of Persia."

When Dinarzadè perceived the sultana, her sister, had concluded her speech, she thanked her most kindly for the pleasure she had afforded her by the recital of so interesting a history: "If the sultan," replied Scheherazadè, "would suffer me to live till to-morrow, I would relate to him the history of Prince Camaralzaman, which he would find still more agreeable." She was then silent; and Schahriar, who could not yet determine to give orders for her death, deferred it, in order to listen to the new story, which the sultana began to relate on the following night.

THE HISTORY OF THE AMOURS OF CAMARALZAMAN, PRINCE OF THE ISLE OF THE CHILDREN OF KHALEDAN, AND OF BADOURA, PRINCESS OF CHINA.

ABOUT twenty days' sail from the coast of Persia, sire, there is, in the open sea, an island, which is called the Isle of the Children of Khaledan. This island is divided into several large provinces, with many large, flourishing, and well-peopled towns scattered over them, and forms altogether a very powerful kingdom. It was formerly governed by a king, named Schahzaman, who had four wives, as was the custom, all daughters of kings, and sixty concubines.

Schahzaman esteemed himself the happiest sovereign on the whole face of the earth, on account of the tranquillity and prosperity of his reign. One thing alone affected his happiness; he was already far advanced in years, and he had no children, notwithstanding his great number of wives. He could not account in any way for this circumstance; and in the moments of his affliction he considered it as the greatest misfortune that could befall him, to die without leaving a successor to the throne descended from himself. For some time he concealed the tormenting anxiety that preyed upon him; and he suffered the more from endeavouring to assume an air of cheerfulness. At length he broke silence; and one day, having complained of his misfortune, in the bitterest terms of sorrow, in a private conversation he had with his grand vizier, he asked him if he knew of any means to remedy so great an evil.

"If what your majesty requires," replied this wise minister, "depended on the common interference of human wisdom, you might soon have the gratification you so ardently desire; but I confess my experience and knowledge is not equal to solve what you ask; to God alone must you apply in such cases; in the midst of our prosperity, which often makes us forget what we owe him, he sometimes mortifies us on some interesting point, that we may turn our thoughts to him. Acknowledge his universal power, and ask of him that which we cannot obtain but by his interference. You have amongst your subjects some men who devote themselves to the particular profession of knowing and serving him, and lead a life of penance and hardship for the love of him; my advice is, that your majesty should bestow alms on them, and request them to join their prayers to yours; perhaps amongst so great a number, one may be sufficiently pure and acceptable to God, to obtain from him the completion of your wishes."

The king approved this advice, for which he thanked his grand vizier. He ordered alms to a considerable amount to be presented to each of these communities of people consecrated to God; he then desired the superiors of them to come to him, and after having regaled them with a repast suited to their

frugal manner of living, he declared his intention, and begged them to acquaint the devotees of it also, who were under their authority.

Schahzaman obtained from heaven what he so much desired, and which was soon evident by the pregnancy of one of his wives, who, at the expiration of nine months, presented him with a son. To testify his gratitude, he sent fresh presents to the societies of devout Mussulmen, which were worthy of his dignity and greatness; and the birth of the prince was celebrated by public rejoicings for a whole week, not only in his capital, but throughout his extensive dominions. The young prince was taken to him immediately on his birth, and he thought him so very beautiful, that he gave him the name of Camaralzaman, which means the moon of the age.

Prince Camaralzaman was educated with all possible attention, and when he had reached a proper age, the sultan appointed him a prudent governor, and able preceptors. These persons, distinguished by their superior understandings, found in him a docile and intelligent disposition, capable of receiving all the instruction they wished to give him, either for the forming of his morals, or the cultivation of his mind, in such acquirements as a prince in his situation ought to be possessed of. And when of a more advanced age, he learned various exercises with the same degree of facility, and acquitted himself with so much grace and address, that he charmed every beholder, but more particularly the sultan his father.

When the prince had attained the age of fifteen years, Schahzaman, who loved him with the greatest tenderness, and of which he gave him every day new and stronger proofs, conceived the design of bestowing on him the most striking mark of his affection, by descending from the throne himself, and raising his son to that distinguished situation. He communicated it to his grand vizier. "I fear," said he, "that in the idleness of youth, my son will lose not only those advantages which nature has bestowed on him, but also such as he has so successfully acquired by the good education I have given him. As I am now advanced to an age to make me think of retiring from the world, I have almost resolved to give up the government to him, and to pass the rest of my days in the satisfaction of seeing him reign. I have laboured a long time, and I now want repose."

The grand vizier would not then represent to the sultan all the reasons that might dissuade him from putting this design into execution; on the contrary, he appeared to concur in his wish. "Sire," replied he, "the prince is still too young, I think, to be charged at so early a period with a burden so heavy as that of governing a powerful state. Your majesty is fearful that he may be corrupted, if suffered to lead a life of inactivity and indolence, and indeed with reason; but to remedy that evil, would it not, in your opinion, be more proper to marry him first? Marriage is likely to render his affections steady, and to prevent his entering into dissipation; added to that, your majesty might allow him admittance to your councils, by which he would learn by degrees to sustain the brilliancy and weight of your crown with dignity; and when sufficiently qualified, and you by experience found him equal to the undertaking, you might still resign it in his favour."

Schahzaman thought this advice from his prime minister very reasonable and prudent; he therefore summoned his son, Prince Camaralzaman, to attend him as soon as the grand vizier had taken his leave.

The prince, who hitherto had only seen the sultan at certain stated hours, without requiring a summons, was rather surprised at this order. Instead, therefore, of presenting himself before him in his usual free manner, he saluted him with great respect, and stopped as soon as he was in his presence, fixing his eyes on the ground.

The sultan perceived the restraint of the prince. "My son," said he, in a tone intended to inspire him with confidence, "do you know on what account I sent for you?" "Sire," replied the prince, modestly, "God alone can penetrate into the recesses of the heart: I shall learn the reason from your majesty's lips with the greatest pleasure." "I did it to acquaint you," resumed the sultan, "that I wish you to marry: what do you think of it?"

Prince Camaralzaman heard these words with great concern. He was quite disconcerted; a cold damp arose on his face; and he knew not how to reply. After some moments passed in silence, he said, "Sire, I entreat you to pardon me, if I appear confused at the declaration your majesty has just made; I did not expect it at my very youthful age. I do not even know whether I shall ever be able to submit myself to the bonds of marriage, for I am well aware of the embarrassment and trouble occasioned by women; besides which, I have frequently read in our authors, of their arts, their cunning, and their perfidy. Perhaps I may not always remain of this opinion; at any rate, I feel that I should require a considerable length of time to induce me to agree to what your majesty requires of me."

This answer of the prince extremely afflicted the sultan his father. This monarch felt real grief at finding in his son so great a repugnance to matrimony. He did not, however, think proper to treat it as disobedience, nor to make use of the authority of a parent; he contented himself with saying, "I will not use any undue influence over you on this subject; I give you time to think of it, and to consider that a prince, destined as you are to govern a large kingdom, ought in the first place to turn his thoughts to provide a successor in his own family. In giving yourself this satisfaction, you will afford me a very great one, who shall love to see myself live over again in you and in the children who are to prolong my race."

Schahzaman said no more to Prince Camaralzaman. He allowed him free entrance to the councils of state, and in every other respect gave him reason to be satisfied with his conduct towards him. At the expiration of a year, he took him aside. "Well, my son," said he "have you remembered to make your reflections on the design I formed last year of marrying you? Will you still refuse me the joy I should experience from your compliance with my wishes, and do you intend that I should die without experiencing this satisfaction?"

The prince appeared less disconcerted than on the former occasion, and did not long hesitate to reply with firmness in these words:—"I have not, sire, omitted to reflect upon the subject. I gave it all the attention which it deserves; but, after having maturely considered it, I am still more confirmed in my resolution to live without any matrimonial engagement." In fact, the numberless evils which women have from time immemorial been the occasion of in the universe, as I have been well informed by our histories, and the daily accounts I hear of their cunning and malice, are the motives which determine me never to have any connexion with them. Therefore, your majesty will pardon me, if I dare to assure you that any arguments you may use to endeavour to persuade me to marry will be fruitless." Here he ceased, and left the presence of the sultan in an abrupt manner, without even waiting for him to return an answer.

Any other monarch besides Schahzaman would with difficulty have restrained himself from using violence, after the rude and obstinate way in which the prince his son had expressed himself, and would have ordered him some punishment; but he tenderly loved him, and wished to employ every gentle means of persuasion before he had recourse to more rigid methods. He communicated this new cause of sorrow, which Camaralzaman had given to him, to his prime minister. "I have followed your advice," said he, "but my son is still more averse to matrimony than he was the first time I spoke to him on the subject;

and he spoke in such a determined manner, that I needed all my reason and moderation to restrain my anger. Fathers who pray for children as ardently as I did, are madmen and fools, who seek to deprive themselves of that repose and quiet which they might otherwise have tranquilly enjoyed. Tell me, I entreat you, by what means I can reclaim a mind so rebellious to my desires?"

"Sire," replied the grand vizier, "a great many things are accomplished through the medium of patience; perhaps this may not be of a nature to be conquered by such means; but your majesty will not have to reproach yourself with being too precipitate, if you consent to allow the prince another year to form his determination. If during this interval he does not return to his duty, you will have a much greater satisfaction in the consciousness of having employed no method but that of paternal kindness to obtain his consent. If, on the contrary, he persists in his obstinacy, then, when the year is expired, I think your majesty will be fully justified in declaring to him, before the whole council, that the good of the state requires his marriage. It is not possible that he should be wanting in respect towards you before an assembly of enlightened and celebrated men which you honour with your presence."

The sultan, who so passionately and ardently wished to see his son married, that so long a delay appeared ages to him, had some difficulty in consenting to wait so much longer. He, however, was persuaded by the arguments of the grand vizier, which he could neither contradict nor disapprove.

When the prime minister had retired, the sultan Schahzaman went to the apartment of the mother of Prince Camaralzaman, to whom he had long since imparted the ardent desire he had of marrying his son. When he had related to her the painful disappointment he had just met with from his second refusal, and also the indulgence he still intended to grant him by the advice of his grand vizier, he added, "I know, madam, that he has more confidence in you than in me; that you converse with him, and that he listens to you with more readiness; I entreat you, therefore, to take an opportunity to speak to him seriously on this subject, and to make him sensible that if he persists in his obstinacy, he will oblige me at last to have recourse to extremities, which I should be sorry to adopt, and which would make him repent of his disobedience."

Fatima, for this was the name of the prince's mother, informed Camaralzaman, the first time she had any conversation with him, that she had been acquainted with his fresh refusal to marry, which he had testified to the sultan; and expressed herself much chagrined at his having occasioned his father so great a cause for anger. "Madam," replied Camaralzaman, "do not, I entreat you, renew my vexation on this subject: I fear that, in my present state of mind, I might be guilty of saying something disrespectful to you." Fatima knew by this answer that the wound was too recent to continue the subject; she therefore dropped it for the present.

Some time after this, Fatima thought she had met with an opportunity of renewing it, and with more prospect of success in obtaining a hearing. "My son," said she, "if it be not painful to you, pray tell me what are the reasons that have given you so great an aversion to marriage? If you have none stronger than the art and wickedness of women, believe me, you could not have chosen any more weak or unreasonable. I will not undertake the defence of artful women, for that there are numbers of that description, I am well persuaded; but it is the most flagrant injustice to accuse the whole sex of this crime. Surely, my son, you do not form your opinion from the few examples which your books mention, and who have, I confess, occasioned great disorder and confusion in the world; such I will not attempt to justify; but why, on the other hand, do not you remark, also, the many monarchs, sultans, and inferior princes, whose tyranny, barbarity, and cruelty excite the deepest horror

in those histories, which I have read as well as yourself. For one woman, who has been guilty of such crimes, you will find a thousand of these barbarians and tyrants. And do you think the poor women, who have the misfortune to be married to these wretches, and who are perhaps good and prudent wives, can be very happy?"

"Madam," replied Camaralzaman, "I do not doubt that there is in the world a great number of prudent, good, and virtuous women, of gentle dispositions and good morals. Would to God they all resembled you! But what deters me is the doubtful choice a man is obliged to make when marrying, or rather the dread that he is often deprived of the liberty of making that choice himself.

"Let us suppose," continued he, "that I had consented to form a matrimonial engagement, as the sultan my father so impatiently wishes; what wife would he give me? a princess, in all probability, whom he would request of some neighbouring prince, and who would, no doubt, think it a great honour. Handsome or ugly, she must be received; but even supposing she excels every other princess in beauty, who can insure that her mind will be equal to her person? That she will be gentle, obliging, affable, and engaging? that her conversation will not be frivolous; of dress, of ornaments, of appearance, and a thousand other trifles, which must create contempt in a man of good sense? In a word, that she is not proud, haughty, irascible, disdainful, and one who will ruin a whole kingdom by her frivolous expenses in dresses, jewels, trinkets, or in tasteless and empty magnificence.

"Now you see, madam, on one subject only, how many things there are to give rise to my antipathy to matrimony; but even if this princess be so perfect and so accomplished, that she is irreproachable on all these points, I have a great number of reasons still stronger than any I have expressed, to make me continue in the same opinion, and adhere to my resolution."

"What, my son!" exclaimed Fatima, "can you add more objections to those you have already stated! I was going to answer you, and refute your arguments with one word." "That need not prevent you, madam," replied the prince; "I shall probably have some reply to make to your answers."

"I was going to say, my son," resumed Fatima, "that it is easy for a prince, who should have the misfortune to marry a princess such as you describe, to leave her, and also to adopt such measures as might prevent her ruining the state."

"Well, madam," said Prince Camaralzaman; "and do you not consider what a cruel mortification it must be to a prince to be under the necessity of having recourse to such extremities? Is it not much better, both for his peace of mind and for his reputation, not to expose himself to it?"

"But, my son," replied Fatima, "from the way you treat this matter, I conclude that you intend to be the last king of the race from which you are descended—and which has so gloriously filled the throne of the Island of the Children of Khaledan."

"Madam," continued the prince, "I have no wish of surviving the king my father. Even should I die before him, he ought not to be surprised, since there are so many examples of children dying before their parents. But it is always glorious for a race of kings to finish with a prince so worthy of being a sovereign as I should endeavour to be, by imitating my predecessors, and him with whom the line began."

After this, Fatima repeatedly had conversations of the same nature with the prince her son, and she left no means untried, by which she might hope to eradicate his aversion. But he confuted all the reasons she could produce, by others equally strong, to which she knew not what to reply, and remained unshaken in his determination.

The year passed on, and Prince Camaralzaman, to the great regret of the sultan Schahzaman, did not show the least appearance of having altered his sentiments. At length, one day, when the grand council met, and the first vizier, the other viziers, the principal officers of the crown, and the generals of the army were assembled, the sultan thus addressed the prince: "It is now a long time, my son, since I expressed to you the anxious desire I have of seeing you married, and I expected from you a greater attention to the wishes of a father who required of you nothing but what was reasonable. After so long a resistance on your part, which has entirely exhausted my patience, I now repeat the same thing to you, in the presence of my council. It is not only that by persisting in your refusal you disoblige your father, but the welfare of my dominions requires your compliance, and all these nobles join with me in requesting it. Declare your sentiments before them, that from the answer you make me, I may know what measures to adopt."

Prince Camaralzaman answered with so little temper, or rather with so much warmth, that the sultan, justly irritated by the behaviour of his son before the full council, exclaimed, "What, undutiful son! have you the insolence to speak thus to your father, and your sultan!" He immediately ordered him to be arrested by the officers present, and to be conducted to an ancient tower which had been long neglected, where he was confined, with only a bed and very little furniture, a few books, and one slave to attend him.

Camaralzaman, satisfied with having the liberty of amusing himself with his books, looked on his imprisonment with indifference. Towards evening, he washed himself, repeated his prayers, and after having read some chapters in the Koran with the same tranquillity as if he had been in his own apartment in the palace, he lay down without extinguishing his lamp, which he left by his bed's side, and fell asleep.

In this tower there was a well, which during the day formed a retreat for a fairy, called Maimouné, the daughter of Damriat, the king, or chief, of a legion of Genii. It was about midnight when Maimouné lightly darted to the top of the well, to prepare for her nightly excursion, as was her usual custom, and wander about the world wherever curiosity might lead her. She was much surprised to see a light in the chamber of Camaralzaman. She entered it, and without being stopped by the slave, who was stationed at the door, she approached the bed, the magnificence of which attracted her attention; but her surprise was much increased at observing that somebody was in it.

Camaralzaman's face was half concealed by the covering of the bed. Maimouné raised it a little, and beheld the handsomest youth she had ever seen in any part of the habitable world, through all of which she had frequently traversed. "What brilliancy," said she to herself, "or rather what a prodigy of beauty must those eyes display, when no longer concealed as they now are by such well-formed eyelids! What cause can he have given to be treated in a manner so unworthy of his rank?" for she did not doubt who it was, and had already heard of his disgrace.

Maimouné could not cease admiring the beauty of Prince Camaralzaman; at length, however, having kissed him gently on the cheek, and on the middle of his forehead, without waking him, she replaced the covering as it was before, and took her flight through the air. When she had risen very high towards the middle region, she was suddenly struck by the sound of wings, which inclined her to fly to the quarter from whence it came. On approaching, she found it to be a Genius who occasioned the noise, but one of those who had rebelled against God. Maimouné was, on the contrary, one of those who acknowledged the great Solomon.

This Genius, who was named Danhasch, and who was the son of Scham-

hourasch, recognised Maimounè, though not without very great terror, knowing that she possessed considerable superiority over him, in consequence of her submission to God. He would therefore fain have avoided this meeting, but he found he was so close to her that he must either encounter a battle, or submit.

Danhasch was the first to speak : " Good Maimounè," said he in a supplicating tone, " swear to me by the great name of God, that you will not hurt me, and I promise on my part not to annoy you."

" Cursed Genius," cried Maimounè, " what harm canst thou do to me ? I fear thee not. But I will grant thee this favour, and I make the oath thou requir'st. Now tell me whence thou comest, what thou hast seen, and what thou hast done this night ?" " Beautiful lady," replied Danhasch, " we meet opportunely for you to hear something wonderful. Since you wish it, I will tell you that I come from the extremity of China, where its coast overlooks the farthest islands of this hemisphere. But, charming Maimounè," interrupted Danhasch, who trembled with fear in the presence of this fairy, and had some difficulty in speaking before her, " you promise at least to forgive me, and to permit me to depart, when I shall have satisfied your curiosity ?"

" Go on, go on, wretch," replied Maimounè, " and fear nothing. Dost thou think I am as perfidious as thyself, and that I am capable of breaking the terrible oath I have taken ? Take care only to relate nothing but what is true, otherwise I will cut thy wings and treat thee as thou deservest."

Danhasch felt a little relieved by these words of Maimounè. " My dear lady," continued he, " I will tell you nothing but what is very true : have but the goodness to listen to me. The country of China, from whence I come, is one of the largest and most powerful kingdoms in the world ; and attached to it are the most distant isles of this hemisphere, of which I spoke just now. The present king is named Gaiour, who has an only daughter, the most beautiful creature that ever was beheld on earth, since this world has been a world. Neither you, nor I, nor the Genii of your party, nor of mine, nor all mankind put together, could find proper terms, words sufficiently expressive, or eloquence suited to convey the most distant idea of what she is in reality. Her hair is of a fine brown, and of such a length that it reaches below her feet, and in such abundance, that when she wears it in curls on her head, it resembles a fine bunch of grapes, of which the fruit is of an extraordinary size. Under her hair appears her forehead as smooth as the finest polished mirror ; her eyes even with it, of a brilliant black, and full of fire ; the nose neither too long nor too short ; the mouth small and tinted with vermilion ; her teeth surpassing the finest pearls in whiteness ; and when she opens her mouth to speak, she utters a sweet and agreeable voice, and expresses herself in words which prove the liveliness of her wit. The most beautiful alabaster is not whiter than her bosom. In short, by this feeble sketch, you may easily suppose that there is not a more perfect beauty in the world.

" Whoever is not well acquainted with the king her father would imagine, from the various proofs of affection he is continually giving her, that he is enamoured of her. The most tender lover was never known to do so much for the most beloved mistress as he has done for his daughter. In fact, the most violent jealousy never invented so much as his care to render her inaccessible to every one except the fortunate person who is destined to marry her ; and that she may not feel the retreat to which he has confined her irksome, he has had seven palaces built for her, which surpass in magnificence everything that was ever heard of.

" The first palace is composed of rock crystal, the second of bronze, the third of the finest steel, the fourth of another kind of bronze, more precious than

either the first or steel, the fifth of touchstone, the sixth of silver, and the seventh of massive gold. He has furnished them in the most sumptuous style, each in a manner appropriate to the materials of which it is built. Nor has he forgotten to embellish the gardens which are attached to them with everything that can delight the senses : smooth lawns or pastures, enamelled with flowers ; fountains, canals, cascades ; groves thickly planted with trees, through which the rays of the sun never penetrate, and all differently disposed in each garden.

"The fame of this princess's incomparable beauty has induced the most powerful of the neighbouring kings to demand her in marriage by the most solemn embassies. The king of China received all their proposals with the same degree of ceremony ; but as he had determined not to marry the princess except with her own entire consent, and as he did not approve of any of the offers made her, the ambassadors returned without success, yet all highly gratified by the civilities and attentions they had received.

" 'Sire,' would the princess say to the king of China, 'you wish to marry me, and you think by so doing to make me happy. I know your motive, and feel obliged to you for your kindness. But where should I find such superb palaces and such delicious gardens, unless in the territories of your majesty ? Added to which, by your goodness, I am under no restraint, and I receive the same honours as are paid to your own person. These are advantages which I should not enjoy in any other part of the world, whatever prince I might wed. Husbands ever will be masters, and I am not of a disposition to brook command.'

"After several fruitless embassies, one at last arrived from a king, who was richer and more powerful than any who had before applied. The king of China proposed him to his daughter, and enlarged on all the advantages which would result from such an alliance. The princess entreated him to dispense with her compliance, urging the same reasons as on former occasions.

"He pressed her to accede ; but instead of obeying, she forgot the respect due to the king her father, and angrily replied, 'Sire, speak to me no more of this, nor of any other marriage ; if you persist in your importunities, I will plunge a dagger in my heart, and thus free myself from them.'

"The king of China, extremely irritated against the princess, replied, 'My daughter, you are mad, and as such I must treat you.' In fact, he had her confined to an apartment in one of his palaces, and allowed her only ten old women to associate with, and attend on her, the principal of whom was her nurse. Then, that the neighbouring kings who had sent embassies to request her might not entertain any farther prospects of obtaining her, he despatched envoys to announce to them all her absolute determination against marriage. And as he supposed that she really had lost her senses, he commanded the same envoys to make known in each court, that if there were any physician sufficiently skilful to restore her, he should obtain her in marriage as a recompense.

"Beautiful Maimouné," continued Danhasch, "things are at present in this situation, and I do not fail to go regularly every day to contemplate this wonderful beauty, whom I should grieve to injure in the slightest degree, notwithstanding my natural malicious inclinations. I entreat you to come and see her ; it is well worth the trouble. When you are convinced by your own eyes that I do not tell an untruth, I am sure you will feel obliged to me for having shown you a princess who has no equal in beauty. I am ready to conduct you to her, and you have only to command."

Instead of replying to Danhasch, Maimouné burst into a loud fit of laughter, which continued for some time, and which very much astonished Danhasch, who did not know to what cause to attribute it. Having at last, however, composed herself, she said, "Yes, yes, thou thinkest to impose on me. I

thought thou wast going to tell me of something very surprising and extraordinary; and thou talkest to me only of a blear-eyed wench. Fie, fie! What wouldst thou say, then, wretch, if thou hadst seen the beautiful prince I have just been looking at, and whom I love as he deserves? He indeed is rather different. Thou wouldst be mad for love of him."

"Amiable Maimounè," replied Danhasch, "may I inquire who this prince can be whom you speak of?" "Know," said the fairy, "that nearly the same thing has happened to him as to the princess thou hast been talking of. The king his father would marry him by force; after long and repeated importunities, he has frankly declared that he would not agree to it. For this reason, he is at this moment imprisoned in an ancient tower where I take up my abode, and where I have had an opportunity of admiring him."

"I will not absolutely contradict you," resumed Danhasch, "but, my dear lady, you will give me leave, until I have seen your prince, to think that no mortal, either male or female, can equal, or even approach, the beauty of my princess." "Peace, wretch," replied Maimounè; "I tell thee again that thou art wrong." "I will not obstinately oppose you," added Danhasch; "the only means of convincing you whether I speak truth or not, is to accept the proposal I have made you to come and see my princess, and afterwards to show me your prince." "There is no occasion for me to take so much trouble," said Maimounè; "there is another method by which we can both be satisfied, that is, to bring thy princess and place her by the side of my prince on his bed. We can then easily compare them with each other, and thus settle our dispute."

Danhasch consented to do as the fairy desired, and was going instantly to set off for China, but Maimounè stopped him: "Stay," said she, "come with me first, that I may show thee the tower where thou art to bring thy princess." They flew together to the tower, and when Maimounè had shown it to Danhasch, she said, "Now go and fetch thy princess: be quick, and thou wilt find me here. But listen, I intend thou shalt pay me a forfeit if my prince turns out to be handsomer than thy princess; I will also pay thee one if thy princess is the most beautiful."

Danhasch, having quitted the fairy, flew to China, and returned with inconceivable swiftness, bearing the beautiful princess along with him fast asleep. Maimounè received her, and introduced her into the chamber of Prince Camaralzaman, where they placed her on the bed by his side.

When the prince and princess were thus close to each other, a grand contest arose on the pre-eminence of their beauty between the Genius and the fairy. They stood for some time admiring and comparing them in silence. Danhasch was the first to speak: "Now you are convinced," said he to Maimounè; "I told you that my princess was more beautiful than your prince. Have you any doubts remaining?"

"How; any doubts?" cried Maimounè; "yes, truly, I doubt it. Thou must be blind not to see that my prince is infinitely superior to thy princess. She is beautiful, I confess; but do not hurry thyself: compare them well one with the other, without prejudice, and then thou wilt see that it is as I sav."

"Were I to compare them for any length of time," replied Danhasch, "I should think no otherwise than I do. I saw what I now see from the first glance, and time would show me no more than what is now visible to my eyes.

This, however, will not prevent me from giving up my judgment to yours, charming Maimounè, if you wish it." "It shall not be so," interrupted the fairy; "I will never suffer a cursed Genius such as thou art to show me favour. I will submit the contest to an arbitrator, and if thou dost not consent, I win the cause by your refusal."

Danhasch, who was ready to show any degree of complaisance to Maimounè, had no sooner consented, than the fairy struck the ground with her foot. The earth opened, and instantly a most hideous Genius appeared. He was hunch-backed, lame, and blind of one eye, having six horns on his head, and his hands and feet hooked. As soon as he was out, and the ground had closed again, he perceived Maimounè, and threw himself at her feet; and kneeling on one knee, he asked what she desired of his very humble services.

"Rise, Caschcasch," said she, for this was the name of the Genius; "I sent for you hither to be judge in a dispute which exists between me and this cursed Danhasch. Cast your eye on that bed, and tell us impartially, which appears to you the most beautiful, the young man or the young lady."

Caschcasch looked very attentively at the prince and princess, and showed every mark of surprise and admiration. After having examined them very accurately for a long time, without being able to make up his mind, "Madam," said he to Maimounè, "I confess to you that I should deceive you and betray myself, if I were to tell you that I thought one of them more handsome than the other. The more I examine them, the more each seems to me to have separately that sovereign perfection of beauty which they jointly possess; and neither has the least defect which we can assert the other to be free from, and consequently superior. If there be, in truth, any difference between them, there seems to be only one mode of discovering that difference; and this mode is, to wake them one after the other, and to agree that the person who feels for the other the most violent love, and proves it by the strongest and most ardent expressions, as well as by the general conduct, shall be considered in some point or other to be less beautiful."

The proposal of Caschcasch was approved of, both by Maimounè and Danhasch. Maimounè then changed herself into a flea, and jumped upon the neck of Camaralzaman. She gave him so sharp a bite that he awoke, and put his hand to the place; but he caught nothing, for Maimounè, prepared for this, had jumped away, and taking her original form, invisible however, like the other two Genii, to all but themselves, stood by, in order to witness what was going forward.

In drawing back his hand the prince let it fall upon that of the princess of China. He opened his eyes, and expressed great surprise at seeing a lady by the side of him, and one too who possessed such beauty. He lifted his head up, and supported it on his elbow, in order the better to observe her. The great youth of the princess, joined to her incomparable beauty, kindled in an instant a flame in his heart to which he had hitherto been a stranger, and excited sensations which he had till now looked upon with aversion.

A passion of the most animated kind now occupied his soul, and he could not help exclaiming, "What beauty! what charms! Oh my heart, my soul!" and saying this, he kissed her forehead, her cheeks, and her lips, with so little precaution, that it must have broken her slumbers, if she had not, through the enchantment of Danhasch, slept more soundly than usual.

"What, my lovely creature," said the prince, "will not these marks of the love of Camaralzaman disturb thy repose? Whoever thou mayest be, he is not unworthy of thy affection." He was then going to wake her in good earnest, but he suddenly stopped himself. "There cannot be a doubt," he exclaimed, "but that this is the person to whom the sultan my father wished to marry me. He has been much to blame not to let me see her sooner; I should not then have offended him both by my disobedience and my public behaviour towards him, and he would thus have spared himself the confusion which I have caused him." Prince Camaralzaman repented most heartily of the fault he had been guilty of, and was again on the point of waking the princess of



CAMARAJAMAN AND BALGURA

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China. "Perhaps, indeed," added he, "the sultan my father wished to surprise me, and has therefore sent this lady, to ascertain whether I really have so great an aversion to marriage as I have always shown. Who knows if he may not have brought her here himself, and may even now be concealed, in order to see how I conduct myself, and make me ashamed of my former dissimulation. This second fault would be much worse than my first; I will therefore satisfy myself with this ring, in remembrance of her."

The princess of China had a very beautiful ring on her finger, and as the prince concluded his speech, he drew it off quietly, and put one of his own in its place. He then turned his back, and it was not long before, through the enchantment of the Genii, he fell into as deep a sleep as he was in at first.

As soon as Prince Camaralzaman's eyes were completely closed, Danhasch, in his turn, transformed himself into a flea, and bit the princess directly under her lip. She awoke suddenly, and starting up, opened her eyes. How great was her astonishment at finding herself in bed with a man! From surprise she passed to admiration, and from admiration to excess of joy, which was very apparent as soon as she saw that it was a young, handsome, and well-made man.

"What!" she exclaimed "are you the person whom the king my father has destined for my husband? How unfortunate am I at not having known this before! I should then never have been deprived for so long a time of a husband whom it is impossible not to love with my whole soul. Awake, and rouse yourself; it but ill becomes a husband to sleep thus soundly on the very first night of his nuptials."

Having said this, the princess shook Prince Camaralzaman by the arm in so violent a manner that he must have awoke if Maimouné had not at that very instant heightened his sleep by means of enchantment. She shook him in this manner several times; then, as she found she could not prevent him from sleeping, she called out. "What can possibly have happened to thee? What rival, jealous of our mutual happiness, has had recourse to magic, and thus thrown thee into this insurmountable fit of stupefaction, from whence it seems almost impossible thou shouldst ever be roused?" She then took hold of his hand, and tenderly kissing it, she perceived the ring which he had on his finger. It appeared so like her own, that she was convinced it was the very same, and at the same moment observed that she herself had on a different one. She could not comprehend how this exchange had been effected; but she did not for an instant doubt that it was a sure proof of her marriage. Fatigued with the useless efforts she had made to awake him, and satisfied, as she thought, that he could not leave her; "Since I am unable to rouse thee out of thy sleep," she cried, "I will continue no longer to attempt to interrupt it. We shall see each other again." Then kissing his cheek as she pronounced these last words, she lay down, and in a short time fell asleep.

When Maimouné perceived that she might speak without any danger of waking the princess of China, "Well, wretch," she said to Danhasch, "hast thou observed then, and art thou convinced, that thy princess is less beautiful than my prince? Get along; I forgive thee the wager thou hast lost; but another time, believe me when I assert anything." Then turning toward Caschasch, "As for you," added she, "I thank you. Do you and Danhasch take the princess, and carry her to her bed, where he brought her from." Danhasch and Caschasch executed the orders of Maimouné, while the latter retired to her cell.

When Prince Camaralzaman awoke the next morning, he looked on each side of him, to see if the lady whom he had found by him in the night was still there; but when he perceived she was gone, he said to himself, "It is as

I suspected; the king my father wished to surprise me; I am, however, happy that I was aware of it." He then called the slave, who was still asleep, and desired him to make haste and dress himself, without saying a word to him on what account he was in such a hurry. The slave brought a basin and water; the prince then washed himself, and after saying his prayers, he took a book, and continued to read for some time.

After he had thus finished his usual occupations, Camaralzaman called the slave towards him. "Come here," he said, "and be sure you do not tell me a falsehood. Inform me how the lady who slept with me last night, came here, and who brought her."

"Prince," replied the slave, in the greatest astonishment, "of what lady are you speaking?" "Of her, I tell you," answered the prince, "who either came or was brought here, and who passed the night with me." "Prince," returned the slave, "I swear to you that I know nothing about the matter. How could any lady possibly get in, as I slept at the door?" "Thou art a lying rascal," replied the prince, "and art in league with some one to vex and distress me." Saying this, he gave him a blow, and knocked him down; then, after having trampled on him, he tied the rope of the well round his body, and let him down into it, and plunged him several times in the water. "I will drown thee," cried he, "if thou dost not immediately acquaint me who the lady is, and who brought her."

The poor slave, extremely embarrassed, and half in and half out of the water, thought the prince had certainly lost his senses through grief, and that he could only escape by telling an untruth. "Prince," said he, in a supplicating tone, "grant me my life, I conjure you; and I promise to tell you exactly how the matter stands."

The prince drew up the slave, and commanded him to speak. When he was out of the well, "Prince," said the slave, trembling, "you must be sensible that I cannot satisfy you in the state I am now in; allow me time to change my dress." "I grant it thee," replied the prince; "but be quick, and take care thou dost not disguise the truth from me."

The slave went out, and after having fastened the door on the prince, he ran to the palace, wet as he was. The king was engaged in conversation with his grand vizier, and was complaining of the restless night he had passed, in consequence of the disobedience and ill-judged rashness of the prince, his son, in thus opposing his will.

The minister endeavoured to console him, and convince him that the prince, by his disrespectful behaviour, had justly merited the punishment he endured. "Sire," said he, "your majesty ought not to repent of having arrested him. If you will have the patience to suffer him to remain in prison, you may be assured that he will lose this youthful impetuosity, and that he will at length submit to whatever you may require of him."

The grand vizier had just uttered these words, when the slave presented himself before King Schahzaman. "Sire," said he, "I am sorry to be obliged to announce to your majesty a piece of intelligence that will no doubt occasion you great sorrow. What the prince says of a lady who slept with him last night, together with the manner in which he treated me, as your majesty may perceive, too plainly prove that he is not in his senses." He then gave a detail of everything that Prince Camaralzaman had said, and of the excesses he had committed on his person, in terms which confirmed the truth of the account.

The king, who was not prepared for this new cause for affliction, exclaimed to the grand vizier, "This is indeed an incident of the most distressing nature, and very different from the hopes you flattered me with just now. Go, lose not a moment, and examine yourself the whole of this affair, and then come and

inform me of what you discover." The grand vizier immediately obeyed. When he entered the chamber of the prince, he found him seated, with a book in his hand, which he was reading with apparent composure. He saluted him; and seating himself by his side, "I am very angry with the slave that attends you," said he, "for having alarmed your father by the intelligence he has just now brought him." "What is this intelligence," inquired the prince, "that has occasioned my father so much alarm? I have much more reason to complain of my slave."

"Prince," replied the vizier, "Heaven avert that what he has just said of you be true! The tranquil state in which I find you, and in which may God preserve you, convinces me there is no truth in his report." "Perhaps," replied the prince, "he has not explained himself properly; but as you are here, I am glad to have an opportunity of asking you, who must know something about the matter, where the lady is who slept with me last night?"

The grand vizier was quite astonished at this inquiry. "Prince," said he, "do not be surprised at the astonishment you see me in at this question. How can it be possible, not only that any lady, but that any man whatever could have penetrated into this place in the night, to which there is no other entrance but by the door, and even then he must trample over your slave, who was guarding it? I entreat you to collect your thoughts, and I am persuaded you will find it is only a dream, that has left a strong impression on your mind."

"I shall pay no attention to your arguments," resumed the prince in a more elevated tone of voice: "I will absolutely know what is become of this lady; I am here in a situation to make you obey me." This firmness of speech and manner embarrassed the grand vizier more than can be expressed; and he now only thought of the best means to extricate himself. He tried the prince with gentle means, and asked him in the most humble and conciliating manner if he had himself seen the lady.

"Yes, yes," replied the prince, "I saw her, and soon perceived that you had instructed her in ways to tempt me. She played the part you allotted her vastly well; not to say a word, to pretend to sleep, and to take herself away as soon as I fell asleep again. You know it all, I dare say; she has not failed giving you an account of the whole transaction." "Prince," resumed the grand vizier, "I swear to you, that all you have been relating was unknown to me, and that neither the king, your father, nor I sent you the lady you mention; we should never have had such an idea. Allow me once more to say, that this lady could only appear to you in a dream."

"You come to mock me too," cried the prince angrily, "and tell me that what I have seen was only a dream?" He then seized him by the beard and beat him most unmercifully, till his strength quite failed him. The poor grand vizier bore all this treatment from Prince Camaralzaman very respectfully. "Here am I," said he to himself, "precisely in the same situation as the slave; happy shall I be if, like him, I can escape from so great a danger." While the prince was still employed in beating him, he cried, "I entreat you, prince, to listen to me for one moment." The prince, tired of this occupation, suffered him to speak.

"I own to you, prince," said the grand vizier, as soon as he had liberty to speak, "that your suspicions are not unfounded; but you well know that a minister is compelled to execute the orders of the king his master. If you will have the goodness to suffer me to go, I am ready to take any message to him with which you will intrust me." "I gave you leave to go," replied the prince. "Tell my father that I will marry the lady whom he sent, or brought me, and who slept with me last night. Be expeditious, and bring me the answer." The grand vizier made a profound reverence on quitting him: but he could hardly

be satisfied of his safety till he was out of the tower, and had fastened the door after him. He presented himself before king Schahzaman with an air of sorrow which alarmed him. "Well," said the monarch, "in what state did you find my son?" "Sire," replied the vizier, "what the slave related to your majesty is but too true." He then gave him an account of the conversation he had with Camaralzaman, of the rage the prince had been in when he attempted to convince him that the lady he spoke of could not possibly have slept with him, of the cruel treatment he had met with from him, and of the excuse by which he had escaped from his fury.

Schahzaman, who was the more grieved at this circumstance, as he had always loved the prince with the greatest tenderness, wished to investigate the truth of it himself; he repaired to the tower, and took the grand vizier with him. Prince Camaralzaman received his father with the greatest respect. The king sat down, and having made the prince sit next him, he asked him many questions, to which he replied with perfect good sense; and from time to time he looked at the vizier, as if to say, that the prince, his son, was not deranged in his intellects, as he had asserted, but that he must himself be deficient in this respect.

At length the king mentioned the lady. "My son," said he, "I beg you to tell me who this lady is, who, they say, slept with you last night." "Sire," replied Camaralzaman, "I entreat your majesty not to add to the vexation I have already encountered on this subject; rather do me the favour to bestow her on me in marriage. Whatever aversion I may hitherto have evinced against women, this young and beautiful lady has so charmed me that I feel no difficulty in avowing my weakness. I am ready to receive her from your hands, with the deepest sense of my obligation to you."

King Schahzaman was thunderstruck at this answer from the prince, which, as it appeared to him, was so inconsistent with the good sense he had shown in former answers. "You speak to me in a way, my son," said he, "that astonishes me beyond measure. I swear to you by the crown which is to adorn your brow when I shall be no more, that I know nothing of the lady you talk of. I have not been accessory to her visit, if any one has been with you; but how is it possible that she should have penetrated into this tower without my consent? as to what my grand vizier said to you, he only invented a story to appease you. It must have been a dream; recollect yourself, I conjure you, and be careful to ascertain the fact."

"Sire," resumed the prince, "I should be for ever unworthy of the goodness of your majesty, if I refused to give faith to the solemn assurance you have given me; but I request you to have the patience to listen to me, and then judge if what I shall have the honour of relating to you can be a dream."

Prince Camaralzaman then told the king, his father, in what manner he had waked in the night. He gave him an exaggerated description of the beauty and charms of the lady he had found by his side, confessed the love which had so instantaneously inflamed his breast, and related all his fruitless endeavours to awaken her. He did not even conceal what had made him awake; and that he fell asleep again after he had made the exchange of his ring for that of the lady. When he concluded, he took the ring from his finger, and presented it to the king. "Sire," added he, "mine is not unknown to you, for you have seen it several times. After this, I hope you will be convinced that I have not lost my senses, as they would fain persuade you is the case."

The king was so fully convinced of the truth of what the prince had recounted to him, that he had nothing to reply. Added to which, his astonishment was so excessive that he remained a considerable time incapable of uttering a single word.

The prince took advantage from these moments of silent wonder. "Sire," continued he, "the passion I feel for this charming person, whose precious image is so deeply engraven on my heart, has already risen to so violent a pinch, that I am sure I have not strength to endure it. I humbly supplicate you to feel compassion for the state I am in, and to procure me the unspeakable happiness of possessing and calling her mine."

"After what I have now heard, my son," replied King Schahzaman, "and what I see by this ring, I can no longer doubt the reality of your love, and that you did absolutely see the lady who gave birth to it. Would to God I knew her! You should be gratified this very day, and I should be the happiest of fathers. But where am I to seek her? How and by what means could she enter here without either my consent or knowledge? Why did she come only to sleep with you, to show you her beauty, to inflame you with love while she slept, and disappear as soon as you fell asleep again? I cannot comprehend this strange adventure, and if Heaven does not assist us, it will be the means of reducing both you and me to the grave." He then took the prince by the hand, and added in a mournful accent, "Come, my son, let us go and mingle our lamentations together; you, for loving without hope, I, for seeing your affliction, with out possessing the means of relieving it."

Schahzaman took the prince out of his prison, and conducted him to the palace, where the prince, quite in despair at feeling so violent a passion for an unknown lady, instantly took to his bed. The king shut himself up from all society for several days to weep with his son, and desisted entirely from attending to the usual concerns of his kingdom.

His prime minister, who was the only one to whom he had allowed free entrance, came one day to represent to him that his whole court, as well as the people, began to murmur at not seeing him as usual, administering justice, as was his daily custom; and that he would not be answerable for the disorders and disorders that might arise in consequence of his seclusion. "I entreat your majesty," continued he, "to pay some attention to these complaints. I am persuaded that your presence only serves to nourish the affliction of the prince, as his presence increases yours; but you must not suffer everything to go to decay. Allow me to propose to you to remove with the prince to the castle on the little island, that is at a short distance from the port, and to have an audience twice a week only. This avocation will oblige you to quit the prince occasionally, while the beauty of the spot, the delicious air, and the charming prospects of the surrounding country will enable him to support these short absences with more patience."

The king approved of this advice, and as soon as the castle, which had not been inhabited for some time, was furnished and prepared for his reception, he removed thither with the prince, whom he never left except for the two stipulated audiences. He passed the rest of the time by the side of his pillow, sometimes endeavouring to console him, and sometimes sharing his affliction.

While these things were passing in the capital of King Schahzaman, the two Genii, Danhasch and Caschcasch had reconducted the princess of China to the palace, where the king her father had confined her, and placed her in her bed.

The next morning when she awoke, the princess of China looked about on each side of her, and when she perceived that Prince Camaralzaman was no longer near her, she called her women in a voice which made them all run quickly to her, and surround her. Her nurse approached her pillow, and asked her what she desired, and if anything had befallen her.

"Tell me," replied the princess, "what is become of the young man who slept with me last night, and whom I love so tenderly." "My princess,"

said the nurse, "we cannot comprehend your meaning unless you explain yourself more clearly." "The fact is," resumed the princess, "that a young man of the most beautiful and elegant form that can be conceived, slept by my side last night; I caressed him for a considerable time, and did all I could to wake him, without effect. I ask you where he is?"

"No doubt you do this to joke us, my princess," replied the nurse; "will you please to rise now?" "I speak seriously," said the princess, "and I will know where he is." "But, my dear princess," rejoined the nurse, "you were alone when we put you to bed last night, and no one has entered this place to sleep with you, at least that we know of."

The princess of China's patience was quite exhausted; she seized her nurse's head, and gave her repeated slaps and blows. "Thou shalt tell me, thou old witch," cried she, "or I will murder thee." The nurse exerted herself to get out of her hands; she at length succeeded, and instantly ran to find the queen of China, the mother of the princess. She presented herself before her, with tears in her eyes, and her face swelled and disfigured: this excited great surprise in the queen, who inquired what was the cause of her being in such a condition.

"Madam," said the nurse, "you see the effects of the treatment I have just received from the princess; she would have destroyed me entirely if I had not escaped as I did." She then related to her the cause of her anger, and subsequent violent behaviour, at which the queen was no less surprised than afflicted. "You see, madam," added she, "that the princess is out of her senses. You may judge of it yourself, if you will take the trouble of coming to see her."

The queen of China was too tenderly attached to her daughter not to feel painfully interested in what she had just heard from the nurse, and immediately went to the princess. She seated herself next her when she got into the apartment where she was confined, and after having inquired if she was in good health, she asked her what subject for discontent she had with her nurse to induce her to treat her so cruelly as she had done. "Indeed, my daughter," said she, "you acted wrong, and a princess of your rank ought never to suffer herself to be so led away by passion as to commit such excesses."

"Madam," replied the princess, "I plainly perceive that your majesty also is come to mock me; but I solemnly declare that I shall have neither peace nor rest till I have married the amiable and charming youth who slept with me last night. You certainly must know who he is; and I beg you will let him come again."

"My dear daughter," replied the queen, "you astonish me; and I cannot understand what you mean." The princess forgot the respect she owed to her mother, and answered, "Madam, the king, my father, and you have persecuted me for some time, to compel me to marry when I had no wish of changing my state; this wish has at length taken possession of my breast, and I will absolutely either marry the young man I told you of or kill myself."

The queen attempted to succeed by gentle methods. "You well know, my dear child," said she, "that you are alone in your chamber, and that no man can possibly enter it." But instead of listening to, the princess interrupted her, and was guilty of such extravagant excesses, that the queen was obliged to leave her to indulge her grief, and acquaint the king with what had happened.

The king of China wished to be personally convinced of the truth of this business. He therefore immediately repaired to the apartment of the princess, and asked her if what he had been informed of was true. "Sire," replied she, "let us not talk of that; only do me the favour to suffer the husband who slept with me last night to return to me."

"What!" exclaimed the king, "has any one slept with you the last night?" "How can you ask me, sire, if any one slept with me?" interrupted the princess, without allowing him time to continue; "your majesty cannot be ignorant of it. He is the handsomest young man that was ever beheld under heaven. I entreat you to send him to me again; do not refuse me, I conjure you. That your majesty may not entertain any doubts of my having seen this youth," added she, "of my having slept with him, caressed him, used every effort to awaken him without success, look if you please at this ring." She held out her hand, and the king of China knew not what to think when he perceived that it was the ring of a man. But as he could not comprehend the least what she said, and he had confined her originally because she was mad, he now thought her still worse than before. So without saying anything more to her, lest he should enrage her to commit violence on her own person, or on any one who might approach her, he had her chained and more closely confined; and ordered that no one except her nurse should attend her, and that a strong guard should be placed at her door.

The king of China, quite inconsolable for the misfortune that had befallen the princess, his daughter, which he believed to be madness, considered what methods should be taken to effect her recovery. He assembled his council, and after having made known the state in which she was, he added, "If any one who is here present is sufficiently skilful to undertake her cure, and succeeds, I will bestow her on him in marriage, and will make him the heir of my crown and dominions."

The desire of possessing so beautiful a princess, together with the hope of governing at some future period so large and powerful a kingdom as that of China, made a strong impression on the mind of an emir who was present, although he was already far advanced in years. As he was well skilled in magic, he flattered himself he should succeed, and therefore offered his services to the king. "I consent," replied the monarch; "but I must first inform you that it is on condition of your losing your head if you do not succeed: it would not be fair that you should be able to acquire so great and enviable a recompense without any risk on your part. What I propose to you will in the same way be proposed to all who shall present themselves after you, in case you do not agree to the condition, or do not succeed."

The emir accepted the proposal, and the king himself conducted him to the apartment of his daughter. The princess covered her face as soon as she perceived the emir. "Sire," said she, "your majesty surprises me, by bringing into my presence a man who is unknown to me, and to whom, as you well know, our holy religion forbids me to expose myself." "My daughter," replied the king, "do not suffer your delicacy to be wounded by his presence; he is one of my emirs, who requests you in marriage." "Sire," resumed she, "this is not the husband you have already bestowed on me, whose faith is pledged to me by the ring I wear: be not offended if I refuse to accept any other."

The emir expected to find the princess committing violent actions and saying extravagant things. He was much surprised to find her collected and tranquil, and to hear her utter such good sense; he therefore was soon convinced that she had no other madness than a strong attachment to some object who had engaged her love. He did not however dare to explain his real sentiments to the king, for he could not have endured the idea that his daughter had bestowed her heart on any other than the man whom he should present to her. "But," said the emir, prostrating himself at the feet of the king, "sire, after what I have just heard from the lips of the princess, it would be useless for me to undertake to cure her. I have no remedies that can be of any service to

her disease ; my life, therefore, is at the disposal of your majesty." The king, irritated by this avowal of inability from the emir, and by the trouble he had occasioned him, ordered his head to be struck off.

Some days after this, that he might not have to reproach himself with having neglected anything that could conduce to the recovery of the princess, this monarch ordered it to be proclaimed in his capital, that if there were any physician, astrologer, or magician inhabiting it, who was sufficiently experienced in his profession to restore her to her senses, he might present himself for that purpose, on the before-mentioned penalty of losing his head if he failed in the attempt. He sent an order to have the same proclamation published in all the principal towns in his dominions, and also in the courts of the neighbouring princes.

The first who presented himself was an astrologer and magician, whom the king ordered to be conducted to the prison of the princess by a eunuch. The astrologer drew out from a little bag he had brought under his arm, an astrolabe, a small globe, a chafing-dish, various kinds of drugs proper for fumigation, a copper vessel, together with several other things, and he desired to have some fire.

The princess of China asked the meaning of all this apparatus. "Princess," said the eunuch, "it is to conjure the evil spirit that possesses you, confine him in this copper vessel, and throw him into the sea."

"Cursed astrologer," cried the princess, "know that I want none of these preparations ; I am perfectly in my senses, and it is thou who art mad. If thy power extends thus far, bring me only him I love, and thou wilt serve and oblige me beyond expression." "If that is the case," replied the astrologer, "I can be of no use, princess ; the king, your father, can alone give you relief." He then replaced in his bag all that he had taken out, truly mortified at having so inconsiderately undertaken to cure an imaginary disease.

When the eunuch had reconducted the astrologer before the king of China, he did not wait for the eunuch to speak to the king, but he addressed himself immediately to him. "Sire," said he, in a firm tone, "your majesty published it to the world, and confirmed me also in opinion, that the princess, your daughter, was mad ; and I had no doubt of being able to restore her to her senses by means of the secrets I am acquainted with ; but I was not long with her before I was convinced that her only malady is violent love, and my art does not extend so far as to cure love sickness ; your majesty can prescribe the remedy better than any one, if you will please to give her the husband she wishes." The king, enraged by what he supposed to be insolence in the astrologer, immediately commanded his head to be struck off.

But, not to weary your majesty with so many repetitions, I will only say, that what with astrologers, physicians, and magicians, one hundred and fifty successively presented themselves, and shared the same fate, and their heads were ranged over each gate of the city.

The nurse of the princess of China had a son, named Marzavan, the foster-brother of the princess, whom she nursed and brought up with her. Their friendship, during their infancy, had been so intimate, that they treated each other as brother and sister as long as they lived together, and even after their more advanced age obliged them to be separated.

Among the various sciences which Marzavan had cultivated from his earliest youth, his inclination had led him more particularly to the study of judicial astrology, geomancy, and other secret sciences, in all of which he had made considerable proficiency. Not satisfied with the information he could obtain from the masters under whose tuition he was, he began to travel as soon as he felt himself sufficiently strong to bear the fatigue. There was no one celebrated

for learning in any science or art whom he did not seek, even in the most distant countries, and continue to associate with, until he had gained all the information he required.

After an absence of several years, Marzavan at length returned to the capital of China. The heads, which he observed ranged over the gate at which he entered the city, surprised him very much. As soon as he was arrived at his house, he inquired the reason of their being placed there; but, above all, he was anxious to be informed of the health of the princess, his foster-sister, whom he had not forgotten. As the answer to his first question implied that to his second also, he was soon made acquainted with what occasioned him much pain; but he waited for his mother, the princess's nurse, to give him full information of the whole affair. Although she was so much engaged in her attendance on the princess, yet she had no sooner learnt the arrival of her beloved son, than she contrived to steal away to embrace and pass a few moments with him. After having related to him, with tears in her eyes, the pitiable state the princess was reduced to, and the reason why the king of China had ordered her to be thus treated, Marzavan asked her if she could not procure him a secret interview, without the knowledge of the king. The nurse meditated for some minutes; she then said, "I cannot say anything to such a proposition at present; but expect me to-morrow at this hour, and I will give you an answer."

As no one except the nurse had access to the apartment of the princess, without first obtaining permission of the eunuch, who commanded the guard at the door, the nurse knowing that he had been only lately appointed to that office, and was ignorant of what had previously taken place at court, addressed herself to him. "You know," said she, "that I have nursed and brought up the princess from her earliest infancy; but perhaps you do not also know that I nursed a daughter of my own at the same time, who was of the same age. She is lately married, and the princess, who still does her the honour of feeling attached to her, desires to see her; but she wishes an interview could it be contrived without any one seeing her come in or go out."

The nurse was going to add more, but the eunuch stopped her. "Enough," said he; "I will always, with the greatest pleasure, do everything in my power to oblige the princess: you may either tell your daughter to come, or go yourself to conduct her hither at night, after the king has retired; the door shall be open to you." As soon as night came on, the nurse went to her son Marzavan. She disguised him in woman's clothes, so that no one could have discovered him to be of the other sex, and took him with her. The eunuch, who had no suspicion that he was not her daughter, opened the door and let them both go in.

Before she presented Marzavan to the princess, the nurse went to her. "Madam," said she, "this is not a woman whom you see; it is my son Marzavan, who is just arrived from his travels, and whom I have found means to introduce into your chamber, disguised by this dress. I hope you will not refuse him the honour of paying his respects to you."

At the name of Marzavan the princess expressed great joy. "Come forward, brother," cried she to Marzavan, "and take off that veil; it is not forbidden to a brother and sister to see each other uncovered." Marzavan saluted her with great respect; but without allowing him time to say anything, "I am delighted," continued the princess, "to see you again in such health after an absence of so many years, during which time no one ever received any intelligence from you, nay, not even your good mother."

"I am infinitely obliged to you for your kindness, my princess," replied Marzavan. "I expected and hoped on my arrival to receive better accounts

of you than those I have heard, and which I witness the truth of with the greatest affliction. I feel very happy; however, that after the repeated failure of so many others, I am arrived in time to administer the remedy you are in need of for your disorder. If I should derive no other advantage of my studies and travels than that of being instrumental to your recovery, I should deem it sufficient recompense."

As he uttered these words, Marzavan drew out a book and other things he had furnished himself with, which he supposed would be necessary, from the accounts his mother had given him of the indisposition of the princess. She no sooner perceived these preparations, than she exclaimed, "What, brother, are you too of the number of those who imagine that I am mad? Listen to me, and be undeceived."

The princess then related to Marzavan all her history, without omitting the most trifling circumstance, nor even that of the ring, which had been exchanged for hers, and which she showed him. "I have disguised nothing from you," continued she: "in what I have told you, I acknowledge that there is something mysterious, which I cannot comprehend, and leads them all to suppose that I am not in my right senses; but they pay no attention to the other circumstances, which are exactly as I have related."

When the princess had ceased speaking, Marzavan, who was filled with wonder and astonishment, remained for some time with his eyes fixed on the ground, and unable to pronounce a syllable. At length raising his head, he said, "If, princess, what you have now told me be true, as indeed I am persuaded it is, I do not despair of procuring you the gratification you so anxiously desire. I only entreat you to arm yourself with patience for some time longer, until I shall have visited those countries which I have not yet been in; when you hear of my return, be assured that he for whom you now sigh with so much love and tenderness will not be very distant from you." Having said this, Marzavan took his leave of the princess, and set out on the following day.

Marzavan travelled from city to city, from province to province, and from island to island. Wherever he went, he heard of nothing but the Princess Badoura (thus was the princess of China called), and of her extraordinary history. At the expiration of four months our traveller arrived at Torf, a large and populous maritime town, where he no longer heard of the princess Badoura, but every one was talking of Prince Camaralzaman, who was said to be ill, and whose history was nearly similar to that of the princess of China. Marzavan experienced a transport of joy that cannot be described; he inquired in what part of the world this prince resided, and he was told the place. There were two ways to it, one by land and the other by sea, the latter of which was the shortest. Marzavan chose this, and embarked in a merchant vessel, which had a good voyage till within sight of the capital of the kingdom of Schahzaman. But unfortunately, through the unskilfulness of the pilot, as the vessel was entering the harbour, it struck on a rock, went to pieces, and sunk just in sight of the castle in which Prince Camaralzaman passed his life, and where his father, King Schahzaman, was at that moment conversing with his grand vizier.

Marzavan could swim extremely well; he therefore did not hesitate to throw himself into the sea, and he steered his course to the castle of King Schahzaman, where he was well received, and every assistance given him, according to the orders of the grand vizier, who had received the king's commands so to do. He had his dress changed, and was treated with the greatest kindness: when he had recovered from his fatigue, he was conducted before the grand vizier, who had desired to see him.

As Marzavan was a youth of a good person and engaging air, this minister

treated him with the utmost civility on receiving him, and soon conceived a great esteem for him, from the sensible and proper answers he made to all the questions he asked him; he discovered almost insensibly, that he had numberless sources of information: at length he could not refrain from saying to him, "I plainly perceive from conversing with you, that you are not a man of common understanding; would to God, that in the course of your travels you had learned some secret that could cure a young man whose illness has plunged this court in the deepest affliction for some time past."

Marzavan replied, that if he were made acquainted with the disease which the person was labouring under, perhaps he might be able to find a remedy for it. The grand vizier then explained to Marzavan the state in which Prince Camaralzaman was, taking up his history from the very beginning. He concealed nothing from him; his so-much-wished-for birth, his education, the desire of King Schahzaman to see him married at an early age, the extraordinary aversion the prince had shown to enter into an engagement of so serious a nature, his behaviour before the council, his subsequent imprisonment, the extravagant excesses he committed in prison, which had suddenly changed into a violent love for an unknown lady, for which there was no other foundation than a ring, which, as the prince pretended, had belonged to this lady, who perhaps was not in existence; in short, the vizier related every circumstance with the most faithful exactness.

• This account gave Marzavan the greatest joy. He felt convinced beyond doubt that Prince Camaralzaman was the person with whom the princess of China was so deeply enamoured, and that this princess was no less the object of the prince's ardent vows. He did not mention his thoughts to the grand vizier; he only said to him, that if he saw the prince he should be better able to judge what remedies it might be necessary to administer. "Follow me," said the vizier, "you will find the king with him, who has already expressed a wish of seeing you."

The first thing that met the eyes of Marzavan, when he entered the chamber, was the figure of the prince lying in his bed, with a languishing air, and his eyes closed. Notwithstanding the situation in which he found him, and regardless of King Schahzaman, who was seated by the side of the bed, as well as of the prince, whom such an exclamation might have alarmed and agitated, he cried, "Heavens! nothing on earth can bear a stronger resemblance." He meant the resemblance to the princess of China, for, in fact, there was a great similitude in their features.

These words of Marzavan excited the curiosity of Prince Camaralzaman, who opened his eyes and looked at him. Marzavan, who had great quickness of invention, took advantage of this moment, and instantly repeated some extempore complimentary verses, although in so mysterious a sense that the king and grand vizier did not comprehend the meaning of them. He so well explained what had happened to him with the princess of China, that the prince entertained no doubt of his knowing her and being able to give him some information respecting her; and he felt a degree of joy at the hope of hearing of her, that soon displayed itself in his eyes and countenance. When Marzavan had finished his compliment, the prince took the liberty of making signs to his father to rise from his seat, and permit Marzavan to take his place.

The king, delighted to see in his son a change which flattered him with hope, arose, and taking Marzavan by the hand, obliged him to sit down in the place he had just quitted. He asked him who he was, and from whence he came; and after Marzavan had replied that he was a subject of the king of China, and that he was then come from his dominions, "God grant," said the king to him, "that you may restore my son to health, and divert his mind from the profound

melancholy in which it is absorbed; my obligations to you will be without bounds, and the proofs of my gratitude shall be so extensive that the whole world shall know that no service was ever before so richly recompensed." As he concluded these words, he left the prince at liberty to converse with Marzavan, whilst he was rejoicing with his grand vizier at so fortunate an occurrence.

Marzavan approached very close to Prince Camaralzaman, and speaking to him in a low voice, "Prince," said he, "the time is come that you should cease to afflict yourself so piteously. The lady for whom you suffer is well known to me; she is the Princess Badoura, daughter to the king of China, whose name is Gaiour. I am certain of the fact, from what she has herself related to me of her adventure, and from what I have already learned of yours. The princess does not suffer less from love of you than you do from your affection towards her." He then related all that he knew of the history of the princess since the fatal night of their almost incredible interview; he did not omit also to inform him of the punishment inflicted, by order of the king of China, on all those who undertook to cure the Princess Badoura of her supposed madness, when they failed of success. "You are the only one," continued he, "who can accomplish her perfect recovery, and you may therefore present yourself for that purpose without fear of incurring the dreadful penalty. But before you can undertake so long a journey, you must be in good health yourself; we will then take the necessary measures for the performance of it. Endeavour, therefore, to regain your strength as quickly as possible."

This discourse of Marzavan instantly produced a wonderful effect. Prince Camaralzaman was so comforted by the hope which had just been poured into his bosom, that he felt sufficiently strong to get up, and he entreated the king, his father, to permit him to dress himself, with an air and countenance which gave him inexpressible joy.

The king embraced Marzavan, to express his thanks, without inquiring the means by which so surprising a change was instantaneously effected; and immediately went out of the room with the grand vizier, to proclaim this agreeable intelligence. He ordered public rejoicings for several days; he distributed presents to his officers and the populace, gave alms to the poor, and had all prisoners set at liberty. In short, nothing but joy and mirth reigned in the capital, and which very soon spread its influence throughout the dominions of King Schahzaman.

Prince Camaralzaman, who felt extremely weakened by continual want of sleep, and by his long abstinence from almost all kinds of food, soon recovered his usual health. He no sooner found himself sufficiently re-established to be able to support the fatigue of so long a journey, than he took Marzavan in private, and said to him, "My dear Marzavan, it is now time to put in execution the promise you have made me. The impatience I feel to see this charming princess, and to put an end to the singular torments she endures for my sake, would soon, I plainly feel, reduce me to the state in which you first saw me, if we were not to set out immediately. One circumstance alone afflicts me, and makes me fear there may be delay; that is, the tender affection of my father, who will never be able to grant me permission to leave him. This will drive me to despair if you cannot devise some scheme to obviate it. You see that he will never suffer me to be out of his sight." The prince could not refrain from tears as he pronounced these last words.

"Prince," replied Marzavan, "I have before now foreseen the great obstacle you mention; it remains with me to act so that he will not prevent our going. The original intention of my journey was to procure remission of her grief and sufferings to the princess of China, which I owed to the mutual friendship

that has united us almost from our birth, and to the zeal and affection with which it is my duty to serve her. I should fail in that duty were I to neglect any means of obtaining consolation for her, and for you at the same time, if I did not employ all the address I am capable of for that purpose. Hear, then, what I have conceived, to obviate the difficulty of obtaining the king's permission to accomplish what we both so earnestly desire. You have not yet been out since I arrived here; express to him a wish to take some exercise, and ask his leave to go on a little hunting excursion for two or three days, with me. There is no reason to suppose he will refuse you. When he has granted your request, you will give orders to have two good horses ready for each—one to ride on, the other for relay; and leave the rest to me."

The next day Prince Camaralzaman watched his opportunity; he told the king, his father, how much he wished to take an airing, and begged him to allow him to hunt for a day or two, with Marzavan. "I do not object to it," replied the king, "provided, however, that you promise me not to remain out longer than one night. Too much exercise at first might be injurious, and a longer absence would be painful to me." The king then gave orders for the best horses to be chosen for him, and took care himself that nothing should be wanting for his expedition. When everything was ready, he embraced him, and having earnestly recommended him to the care of Marzavan, he let him depart.

Prince Camaralzaman and Marzavan reached an open country, and to deceive the two grooms that led the relay of horses, they pretended to hunt, and got as distant from the city as possible. At night they stopped at a caravansera, where they supped and slept till about midnight. Marzavan who was the first to wake, called Prince Camaralzaman, without waking the grooms. He begged him to give him his dress, and to put on another, which one of the grooms had brought for him. They each mounted the horses of relay, and Marzavan leading one of the groom's horses by the bridle, they set out in a quick pace.

At daybreak the travellers found themselves in a forest, at a place where the road divided in four. At this spot, Marzavan begged the prince to wait for him a moment, and rode into the thickest of the forest. He there killed the groom's horse, tore the dress which the prince had on the preceding day, and dipped it in the blood. When he returned to the prince, he threw it into the middle of the road, where it divided.

The prince asked Marzavan what was his design by so doing. "When the king, your father," replied Marzavan, "perceives that you do not return to-night, as you promised, or learns from the grooms that we set out without them while they were asleep, he will undoubtedly send people out different ways, to search for us. Those who come this way, and find this bloody vest, will conclude that some beast of prey has devoured you, and that I have made my escape to avoid the king's anger and resentment; he, thinking from their account that you are no longer in existence, will desist from his researches after us, and thus afford us the opportunity of continuing our journey, without interruption and the fear of being pursued. It is true that the stratagem is a violent one, to occasion so tender a parent the afflicting alarm of having lost a son whom he doatingly loves; but the joy of your father will be beyond all bounds when he shall again discover you to be alive and happy." "Wise Marzavan," cried the prince, "I cannot but approve so ingenious an invention, and feel additional obligations to you for having put it in execution."

The prince and Marzavan, well supplied with valuable jewels to defray their expenses, continued their travels by land and by sea, and met with no other obstacle than the length of time which necessarily must elapse before they could reach their place of destination.

They at length arrived at the capital of China, where Marzavan, instead of conducting the prince to his own house, made him alight at a public khan, for the reception of travellers. They remained there three days, to recover from the fatigue of the journey; and during this interval, Marzavan had an astrologer's dress made for the prince to disguise himself in. When the three days were expired, they went together to the bath, where Marzavan made the prince put on the astrologer's dress; and when they left the bath, he conducted him within sight of the palace of the king of China, and there left him, to go and acquaint his mother, the nurse of Princess Badoura, with his arrival, that she might prepare the princess for the interview.

The prince, instructed by Marzavan in what he was to do, and furnished with every implement necessary for his assumed dress and character, approached the gate of the palace; and stopping before it, cried out with a loud voice, in the hearing of the guard and porters, "I am an astrologer, and I come to complete the cure of the illustrious Princess Badoura, daughter of the great and puissant monarch Gaiour, king of China, according to the conditions proposed by his majesty, to marry her, if I succeed, or to lose my life, if I fail."

The novelty of this address instantly assembled a multitude of people round Prince Camaralzaman, besides the guard and porters belonging to the palace. In fact, it was a long time since either physician, astrologer, or magician had presented himself, after so many tragical examples of people who had failed in their enterprise. They supposed the race was extinct, or, at least, that there were no more so foolish as to expose themselves to almost certain death.

On observing the elegant figure of the prince, his noble air, and the extreme youth which was discernible in his countenance, every one present felt compassion for him. "What are you thinking of, sir?" said those who were nearest to him: "what can be your motive for thus exposing to certain death a life which seems to possess such flattering hopes? Have not the heads, which you have seen ranged at the top of the gates of the city, inspired you with horror? In the name of God abandon this useless and fatal design, and withdraw."

The prince remained firm notwithstanding all these remonstrances, and instead of listening to the entreaties of these people, as he saw that no one appeared to introduce him, he repeated the same words as before, with an oath, which made every one shudder; and they all exclaimed, "He is resolved to die, may God have pity on his youth and on his soul!" He called out a third time, and the grand vizier then came himself, by order of the king of China.

This minister conducted him into the presence of the king. The prince no sooner perceived the monarch seated on his throne, than he prostrated himself, and kissed the earth before him. Of all those whose immeasurable presumption had brought their heads to his feet, the king had not yet seen one so worthy of his attention, and he felt unfeigned compassion for Camaralzaman, when he considered the danger to which he exposed himself. He even conferred greater honour on him; he desired him to approach and seat himself by his side. "Young man," said he, "I have some difficulty in believing, that at your youthful age you can have acquired sufficient experience to dare to undertake the cure of my daughter. I wish you may be able to succeed; I would bestow her on you in marriage, not only without repugnance, but, on the contrary, with the greatest possible pleasure and joy; whereas I should have felt truly unhappy, if any of those who have applied before you had obtained her. But I must declare to you, although it gives me pain to inform you of this condition, that if you fail, neither your youth, nor your noble

and engaging appearance, can mitigate the penalty, and you must lose your head."

"Sire," replied Prince Camaralzaman, "I have infinite obligations to your majesty for the honour you confer on me, and for the kindness you show to an entire stranger. The country I come from is not so distant from your dominions for its name to be unknown there, and therefore render me indifferent to the object I have in view. What would be said of my want of firmness, were I to abandon so generous and praiseworthy a design, after having undergone so much danger and fatigue as I have already encountered? Would not your majesty lose that esteem which you already entertain for me? If I am to lose my life in the attempt, sire, I shall at least die with the satisfaction of not losing that esteem after having obtained it; I entreat you then not to let me remain any longer in my present state of impatience, but to let me prove the infallibility of my art by the means I am now ready to employ."

The king of China commanded the eunuch, who was the guard of the Princess Badoura, and was then present, to conduct Prince Camaralzaman to the apartment of his daughter. But before he departed, he told him he was still at liberty to relinquish his enterprise. The prince, however, would not listen to him; he followed the eunuch with a resolution, or rather with an ardour which astonished all.

Prince Camaralzaman went with the eunuch; and when they had reached a long gallery, at the end of which was the princess's apartment, the prince finding himself so near the dear object, which had made him shed so many tears, and heave so many fruitless sighs, hastened his pace and got before the eunuch, who also advanced quicker, and had some difficulty to overtake him: "Where are you going so fast?" said he, taking hold of his arm. "You cannot get in without me. You must be very desirous to get rid of life, to run so eagerly into the arms of death. Not one of the astrologers I have seen and conducted, where you will arrive but too soon, have shown so much anxiety."

"Friend," said Prince Camaralzaman, looking at the eunuch, and slackening his pace, "the reason is, that all the astrologers you speak of were not so sure of their science as I am of mine; they were certain of losing their lives if they did not succeed, and they were not sure of success; they had therefore some reason to tremble as they approached the place where I am going, and where I am convinced I shall meet with happiness." As he pronounced these words they reached the door. The eunuch opened it and took the prince into a large room, which led to the chamber of the princess, and was divided from it only by a slight door. Before he entered, the prince stopped, and speaking in a tone of voice much lower than before, lest he should be heard in her apartment, "To convince you," said he to the eunuch, "that neither presumption, caprice, nor the fire of youthful ardour, have stimulated me to this enterprise, I submit two ways to your choice: which do you prefer—that I should cure the princess while in her presence, or here, without going any farther, and without even seeing her?"

The eunuch was extremely astonished at the confidence with which the prince spoke to him: he ceased to insult him, and speaking seriously, "It does not matter," said he, "whether it be here or there. In whatever manner you accomplish the business you will acquire immortal glory, not only in this kingdom, but over all the habitable world." "Then," replied the prince, "it is better that I cure her without seeing her, that you may be witness of my skill. Whatever may be my impatience to see a princess of such high rank, and who is to be my wife, I will nevertheless, to gratify you, deprive myself for some moments of so great a pleasure." As he was furnished with everything which was the distinguishing characteristic of an astrologer, he drew out

his writing apparatus, and some paper, and wrote the following note to the princess of China :—

" Prince Camaralzaman to the Princess of China.

" Adorable princess ! the heart-stricken Prince Camaralzaman does not tell you of the inexpressible woes he has endured since the fatal night, when your charms deprived him of that liberty which he had resolved to maintain to the end of his life. He only assures you that he gave you his heart during your sweet sleep ; a sleep that prevented his viewing the animated brilliancy of your eyes, notwithstanding all his efforts to induce you to open them. He even had the presumption to place his ring upon your finger, as a token of his love, and to take yours in exchange, which he sends you, enclosed in this note. If you will condescend to return it him as a reciprocal pledge of yours, he will esteem himself the happiest and most fortunate of lovers. But should you not comply, your refusal will make him submit to the stroke of death with so much the more resignation, as he will receive it for the love he bears you. He awaits your answer in your antechamber."

When Prince Camaralzaman had finished this note, he made a small packet of it with the princess's ring, which he enclosed in it, without letting the eunuch see what it contained ; then giving it to him, he said, " Take this, friend, and carry it to your mistress. If she is not cured the moment she has read this note and seen its contents, I allow you to proclaim to the world, that I am the most worthless and impudent astrologer either of the past, the present, or the future age."

The eunuch went into the princess's chamber, and presenting the packet from Prince Camaralzaman, he said to her, " Princess, an astrologer, who, if I am not mistaken, has more assurance than any who have yet appeared is just arrived, and pretends that you will be cured as soon as you read this note, and see what it encloses. I wish he may be neither a liar, nor an impostor." The Princess Badoura took the packet and opened it with the utmost indifference ; but as soon as she saw the ring, she scarcely allowed herself time to read it. She got up precipitately, and with an extraordinary effort broke the chain which confined her, ran to the door, and opened it. The princess instantly recollected the prince, as he did her. They ran into each other's arms with the tenderest embraces, and without being able to utter a word from excess of joy ; they looked at each other for a considerable time with emotions not to be described, and mingled with surprise at the singularity of their interview, after their former meeting, neither of which could they comprehend. The nurse, who had run out with the princess, made them go into the chamber, where the princess returned her ring to the prince. " Take it," said she ; " I could not keep it without returning yours, which I am resolved not to part with to the end of my life. They cannot either of them be better disposed of."

The eunuch, in the mean time, was gone to acquaint the king of China with what had passed. " Sire," said he, " all the physicians, astrologers, and others, who have hitherto presented themselves to undertake the recovery of the princess, were only ignorant fools. This last has not made use either of magic books, or of conjurations of wicked spirits, or of perfumes, or other things, as they did ; he has cured her without even seeing her." He related the manner in which he had proceeded, and the king, most agreeably surprised, went immediately to the apartment of the princess, whom he tenderly embraced ; he embraced the prince also, took hold of his hand, and joining it to that of the princess, " Happy stranger," cried he, " whoever you may be, I keep my promise, and give you my daughter in marriage. But it is not possible to

persuade me that you are what you appear to be, and what you wished to make me believe."

Prince Camaralzaman thanked the king in the most submissive terms, the better to express his gratitude. "As for what I am, sire," continued he, "it is true that I do not practise astrology for my profession, as your majesty very rightly judged; I only put on the habit of that character to ensure my success in deserving and obtaining an honourable alliance with the most powerful monarch in the universe. I am a prince by birth, the son of a king and a queen; my name is Camaralzaman, and my father is called Schahzaman, and reigns over the well-known Islands of the Children of Khaledan." He then related his adventures, and the miraculous origin of his love for the princess: that her affection for him was conceived at the same time, both of which were fully proved by the exchange of the two rings.

"So extraordinary a history," cried the king, "deserves to be handed down to posterity. I will have it written; and after having deposited the original amongst the archives of my kingdom, I will make it public, that from my dominions it may pass to the neighbouring nations." The ceremony of the nuptials was performed on that very day; and the most solemn festivities and rejoicings took place throughout the extensive dominions of China. Marzavan was not forgotten: the king granted him free access to the court; bestowing on him an honourable charge, with the promise of raising him in future to others more considerable.

Prince Camaralzaman and the Princess Badoura, each arrived at the summit of their wishes, enjoyed the blessings of the married state; and for several months the king of China did not cease from testifying his happiness by continual feasts and entertainments.

In the midst of these pleasures Prince Camaralzaman had a dream one night, in which he thought he saw King Schahzaman, his father, in bed, on the point of death, saying: "This son, whom I brought into the world, whom I have so tenderly cherished, has abandoned me, and he is the cause of my death." He awoke with a deep sigh, which waked the princess also, and made her inquire what occasioned his unhappiness.

"Alas!" cried the prince, "perhaps at this very moment that I am speaking, the king my father breathes no more." He then told her his reason for giving way to such melancholy thoughts. The princess, who had no object but to give him pleasure, and who knew that his earnest desire to revisit his father once more, might diminish the satisfaction he felt at residing with her in a country so distant from his native home, said nothing at the time of her intentions, but on that very day she availed herself of an opportunity of speaking to the king of China in private. "Sire," said she, respectfully kissing his hand, "I have a favour to request of your majesty; and I entreat you not to refuse it me. But lest you should imagine that the prince, my husband, has any part in my solicitations, I must first assure you that he is not acquainted with my intention. It is to permit me to accompany him to see my father-in-law, King Schahzaman."

"Whatever sorrows such a separation may occasion me," replied the king, "I cannot disapprove such a resolution: it is worthy of you, notwithstanding the fatigue you must experience from so long a journey. Go, I give my consent; but it is only on condition that you remain no longer than one year at the court of King Schahzaman. He will not, I hope, object to this proposal, and that we should each see you by turns; he his son and daughter-in-law, and I my daughter and son-in-law." The princess announced this consent to Camaralzaman, who was much rejoiced at it, and thanked her for this new proof of her affection towards him.

The king of China gave orders for the necessary preparations for the journey, and when everything was ready he set out with them, and accompanied them for several days. They at length separated, not without many tears being shed on either side; the king embraced them tenderly, and after having begged the prince to continue to love his daughter with the same affection he then bore her, he left them to continue their journey, and returned himself to his capital, hunting by the way.

The prince and princess had no sooner dried their tears, than they anticipated the joy that King Schahzaman would experience in seeing and embracing them, and what they also would feel at being with him.

After they had been travelling about a month, they arrived on a plain of vast extent, planted from space to space with trees, which formed a very agreeable shade. As the heat on that day was excessive, Prince Camaralzaman thought it expedient to encamp on it. He asked the Princess Badoura if she had any objection to it, who, in reply, said, that she was at that moment going to make the same request of him. They immediately alighted in this beautiful spot; and as soon as their tents were pitched, the princess, who had been resting in the shade, retired to hers, while Camaralzaman went to give orders to the rest of the party. In order to be more at her ease, she took off her girdle, which her women placed by her side; she then fell asleep through fatigue, and her attendants left her.

When Prince Camaralzaman had given all necessary orders, and made the requisite arrangements in the camp, he returned to the tent, and as he perceived that the princess had fallen asleep, he came in and sat down without making any noise. While he was thus sitting with the intention of sleeping himself also, the girdle of the princess caught his eye. He examined the different diamonds and rubies with which it was enriched, one by one; and he perceived a small silk purse, sown neatly to the girdle, and tied with a piece of twist. On touching it, he felt that it contained something hard: curious to know what it was, he opened the purse and took out a cornelian, upon which there were different figures and characters engraven, all of which were unintelligible to him. "This cornelian," said he to himself, "must certainly be of very great value, or my princess would never carry it about with her, and take such great care not to lose it." In fact, this cornelian was a talisman, which the queen of China had given to her daughter to ensure her happiness, which she would ever enjoy, as long as she wore this about her.

In order to examine this talisman the better, as the tent was rather dark, Prince Camaralzaman went to the outside; when, as he was holding it in his hand, a bird made a sudden dart from the air upon it, and carried it away.

Nothing could exceed the astonishment and grief of the prince, when he perceived the talisman thus unexpectedly taken from him by the bird. This accident, the most afflicting that could have befallen him, and occasioned too by an ill-timed curiosity, deprived the princess of a precious gift; this reflection rendered him for some minutes motionless.

The bird having flown away with his prize, alighted on the ground at a little distance, with the talisman still in his beak. Prince Camaralzaman went towards him in the hope of his dropping it; but as soon as he approached, the bird flew a little way and then stopped again. The prince continued to pursue him; the bird then swallowed the talisman and took a longer flight. He again followed him, thinking to kill him with a stone. The farther the bird got from him, the more was Camaralzaman determined not to lose sight of him, and obtain the talisman.

Over hills and valleys the bird drew the prince after him for the whole day, always getting farther from the spot where he had left the Princess Badoura;

and at the close of day instead of perching in a bush, in which Camaralzaman might have surprised him during the night, he flew to the top of a high tree, where he was in safety.

The prince, extremely mortified at having taken so much useless trouble, deliberated whether he should return to his camp. "But," thought he, "how shall I return? Shall I climb the hills and traverse the valleys over which I came? Shall I not lose my way in the dusk of evening, and will my strength hold out? And even if I could, how should I present myself before the princess without her talisman?" Absorbed by these disconsolate reflections, and overcome with fatigue, with hunger, thirst, and sleep, he laid down and passed the night at the foot of the tree.

The next morning Camaralzaman was awake before the bird had quitted the tree, and he no sooner saw him take his flight, than he got up to pursue him, and followed him the whole of that day with as little success as he had done on the preceding one, eating occasionally of the herbs and fruits he met with in his way. He did the same till the tenth day, always keeping his eye on the bird, and sleeping at night at the foot of the tree where it perched on its highest branches.

On the eleventh day, the bird constantly flying on, and Camaralzaman as constantly pursuing, they arrived at a large city. When the bird was near the walls, he rose very high above them, and bending his flight to the other side, the prince entirely lost sight of him, and with him of the hope of recovering the talisman of the Princess Badoura.

Afflicted as he was in so many ways, and hopeless of procuring relief to his sorrows, he entered the city, which was built on the sea-shore, with a very fine harbour. He walked for a considerable time along the streets, not knowing either where he was, or where to go; at length he arrived at the harbour. Still more uncertain what to do, he walked along the shore, till he came to the gate of a garden, which was open, when he stopped. The gardener, who was a good old man, engaged with his labour, happened to raise his head at the same moment; he had scarcely perceived him, and recognised him as a stranger and a Mussulman, before he invited him to go in quickly and shut the gate. Camaralzaman did as he desired, and going up to the gardener, asked him why he had made him take this precaution. "It is," replied the gardener, "because I see that you are a stranger just arrived, and a Mussulman; and this city is inhabited for the most part by idolaters, who have a mortal aversion against Mussulmen, and ill-treat even the few that are here, who profess the religion of our prophet. You, I suppose, are ignorant of this circumstance, and I look on it as a miracle that you should have proceeded so far as this, without meeting with any disagreeable adventure. In fact, these idolaters are above all things attentive to observe Mussulmen strangers who arrive, and to make them fall into some snare, if they be not aware of their wickedness. I praise God that he has conducted you into a place of safety.

Camaralzaman thanked the good man very gratefully for the retreat he so generously offered, and was going to say more, but the gardener interrupted him: "Let us have no more compliments," said he, "you are fatigued and you must want food; come and rest yourself." He took him into his little house, and after the prince had eaten enough of what the gardener had so cordially set before him, he begged of him to tell him the reason of his coming.

Camaralzaman satisfied his curiosity, and when he had finished his story, in which he disguised nothing, he asked, in his turn, by what means he might get back to the dominions of the king his father. "For," added he, "were I to attempt to rejoin the princess, how should I find her, after eleven days, that I have been separated from her by so extraordinary an adventure? How do I

know even that she still exists?" At this sorrowful reflection he could not avoid bursting into tears.

In answer to what the prince had asked, the gardener told him, that the city he was then in was a whole year's journey distant from those countries where Mussulmen lived, and which were governed by princes of their religion; but that by sea he might reach the Isle of Ebony in a much shorter time; and that from thence it would be more easy to pass to the Islands of the Children of Khaledan: that every year a merchant ship sailed to the Isle of Ebony, and that he might avail himself of that opportunity to return from thence to the Islands of the Children of Khaledan. "If you had arrived some days sooner," continued he, "you might have embarked in that which sailed this year. But if you will wait till that of next year sails, and like to live with me, I offer you my house, such as it is, with all my heart."

Prince Camaralzaman esteemed himself very fortunate in having thus met with an asylum in a place where he neither knew any one nor had any interest to form acquaintances. He accepted the offer and remained with the gardener; and while he waited the departure of a merchant vessel for the Isle of Ebony, he employed himself in working in the garden during the day; and the nights, when nothing prevented his thoughts from fixing on his dear Princess Badoura, he passed in sighs, tears, and lamentations. We will leave him in this place to return to the Princess Badoura, whom we left sleeping in her tent.

The princess slept for some time, and on waking was surprised that Prince Camaralzaman was not with her. She called her women, and asked them if they knew where he was. Whilst they were assuring her that they had seen him go into the tent, but had not observed his quitting it, she perceived, on taking up her girdle, that the little bag was open, and that the talisman was no longer in it. She did not doubt that the prince had taken it out to examine it, and that he would bring it back. She expected him till night with the greatest impatience, and could not comprehend what could oblige him to be absent from her so long. When she perceived that night was come on, and that it was already quite dark, and yet he did not return, she gave herself up to the deepest affliction. She uttered a thousand curses both on the talisman and on him who made it; and if respect had not restrained her tongue, she would even have indulged in imprecations against the queen, her mother, for having made her so fatal a present. Although she was distracted at this event,—so much the more afflicting, as she could form no conception why the talisman should be the cause of the prince's departure,—she did not lose her presence of mind, but, on the contrary, formed a courageous design, not common with her sex.

None but the princess and her women knew of Camaralzaman's disappearance, for at that time his people had all retired, and were sleeping in their tents. As she feared they might betray her if his absence came to their knowledge, she endeavoured to subdue her grief, and commanded her women not to say or do anything that might create the slightest suspicion. She then changed her dress for one of Camaralzaman's, whom she resembled so strongly, that his people supposed it to be him on the following morning when she made her appearance, and commanded them to pack up the baggage and proceed on their journey. When all was ready, she made one of her women take her place in the litter, and she herself mounted her horse, and they set off.

After a journey of several months by land as well as by sea, the princess, who had continued the disguise of Prince Camaralzaman, in order to reach the Islands of the Children of Khaledan, arrived at the capital of the Isle of Ebony, the reigning king of which was named Armanos. As those of her people who disembarked the first to seek a lodging for her, had published in the town that the vessel which was just arrived bore Prince Camaralzaman, who was returning

from a long voyage, and whom bad weather had obliged to make for this port, the intelligence soon reached the palace of the king.

King Armanos, accompanied by the greatest part of his court, immediately set out to receive the princess, and met her just as she had left the vessel, and was going to the lodging that was engaged for her. He received her as the son of a king who was his friend and ally, with whom he had always lived on terms of amity, and conducted her to his palace, where he lodged her and her whole suite, notwithstanding her earnest entreaties to be permitted to have a lodging to herself. He conferred upon her all the honours imaginable, besides regaling her for three days with extraordinary magnificence.

When the three days were expired, King Armanos, finding that the princess, whom he still supposed to be Prince Camaralzaman, talked of re-embarking and continuing her voyage, and being quite charmed with a prince who appeared to him so handsome and well-made, and possessed of so much wit and knowledge, spoke to her in private. "Prince," said he, "at the advanced age to which you see I am arrived, with little hope of living much longer, I endure the mortification of not having a son to whom I can bequeath my kingdom. Heaven has bestowed on me one only daughter, who is possessed of such beauty as cannot be matched but with a prince of such high birth, and such mental as well as personal accomplishments as distinguish you. Instead, therefore, of preparing to return to your own country, accept her from my hands, together with my crown, which I from this moment resign in your favour, and remain with us. It is now time for me to repose, after having borne the weight of it for so many years; I cannot do it with more satisfaction to myself than at a period when I am likely to see my state governed by so worthy a successor."

This generous offer of the king of the Island of Ebony, to give his only daughter in marriage to the Princess Badoura, who, being a woman, could not accept her, and of giving up to her all his designs, occasioned her a degree of embarrassment which she little expected. After having told the king that she was Camaralzaman, and having supported the character with so much plausibility, she thought it would be unworthy of a princess of her rank to deceive him, and to declare, that instead of being the prince himself, she was only his wife. But if she refused him, she had just reason to fear, from the extreme desire he had evinced for the completion of the marriage, that he might change his friendship and good-will towards her into enmity and hatred, and might even attempt her life. Besides which, she could not be certain that she should find Camaralzaman at the court of King Schahzaman, his father.

These considerations, together with that of acquiring a kingdom for the prince, her husband, in case she should ever rejoin him, determined Badoura to accept the proposals of King Armanos. Having, therefore, remained for some minutes without speaking, she thus replied, her face being at the same time overspread with blushes, which the king attributed to her modesty, "Sire, I am under infinite obligations to your majesty for the good opinion you have conceived of my person, and for the honour you do me by conferring on me so great a favour, of which I am by no means deserving, yet dare not refuse. But, sire," added she, "I cannot accept so great an alliance, except on condition that your majesty will assist me with your counsels, and that I undertake nothing that you shall not previously have approved of."

The marriage being thus agreed on and concluded, the ceremony of the nuptials was postponed to the following day; and the Princess Badoura took that opportunity of acquainting her officers, who still supposed her to be Prince Camaralzaman, of what was to take place, that they might not be astonished at it, and she assured them that the Princess Badoura had given her consent. She spoke of it to her women also, charging them to continue faithful to the secret.

The king of the Island of Ebony, overjoyed at having acquired a son-in-law with whom he was so well satisfied, assembled his council on the morrow, and declared that he bestowed the princess his daughter in marriage on Prince Camaralzaman, whom he had taken with him, and seated next him; that he resigned his crown to him, and enjoined them to accept him as their king, and to pay him homage. When he had concluded, he descended from the throne, and made the Princess Badoura ascend and take his place, where she received the oaths of fidelity and allegiance from the principal nobles who were present.

At the conclusion of the council, the new king was solemnly proclaimed throughout the city; rejoicings for several days were ordered, and cotriers despatched to all parts of the kingdom, that the same ceremonies and the same demonstrations of joy might be observed.

In the evening the whole palace was in festivity, and the princess Haiatalnefous, for this was the name of the daughter of the king of the Island of Ebony, was conducted to the Princess Badoura, whom every one supposed to be a man, with a magnificence truly royal. The ceremonies being completed, they were left alone, and retired to rest.

The next morning, while the Princess Badoura received the compliments of a large assembly of courtiers on their marriage and accession to the throne, King Armanos and his queen repaired to the apartment of the new queen, their daughter, to inquire how she passed the night. Instead of making any reply she fixed her eyes on the ground, and by the expression of sorrow which overspread her countenance, plainly showed that she was dissatisfied.

In order to console the Princess Haiatalnefous, the king said to her, "My dear daughter, let not this afflict you; when Prince Camaralzaman landed here, he only sought to return as soon as possible to King Schahzaman, his father. Although we have prevented him from putting his design in execution, by means with which he must be well satisfied, we must nevertheless conclude that he feels much disappointment at being so suddenly deprived even of the hope of ever seeing him again, or any one belonging to his family. You may therefore expect, when these emotions of filial tenderness are a little subsided, that he will behave towards you as a good husband."

The Princess Badoura, under the assumed name of Camaralzaman, and king of the Island of Ebony, passed the whole of that day not only in receiving the compliments of her court, but also in reviewing the regular troops belonging to the household, and in several other royal functions, with a dignity and ability which acquired her the approbation of all those who witnessed it.

The night was advanced when she entered the apartment of Queen Haiatalnefous, and she soon perceived, by the restraint with which the latter received her, that she recollected the preceding night. She endeavoured to dissipate her sadness by a long conversation that she held with her, and in which she employed all her eloquence, of which she had a considerable share, to persuade her that she loved her excessively. She at last gave her time to go to bed, and during this interval she began to say a prayer; but she remained so long thus employed that Haiatalnefous fell asleep. She then ceased from praying, and lay down by her side without waking her, as much afflicted at the necessity she was under of acting a character which did not become her, as the loss of her beloved Camaralzaman, whom she unceasingly lamented. She arose the next morning at the break of day before Haiatalnefous awoke, and went to the council dressed in the royal robes.

King Armanos did not fail to see the queen his daughter again on that day, and he found her in tears. He required no further proof to be satisfied of the cause of her affliction. Quite indignant at this affront, for such he conceived it, the cause of which he could not comprehend, "Daughter," said he, "have

patience for one night more; I have elevated your husband to my throne, but I shall find the means of abasing him, and of banishing him from hence with shame and ignominy if he does not behave to you properly. In my present anger at seeing you treated with such neglect, I do not know whether I shall be satisfied with so moderate a punishment. It is not to you, but to my person, that he offers so unpardonable an affront."

The Princess Badoura returned to the chamber of Haiatalnefous as late that evening as on the preceding one. She conversed with her in the same manner, and was then going to say her prayer while she went to bed, but Haiatalnefous prevented her, and obliged her to sit down again. "What!" said she, "I see you intend to treat me this night as you did the two former ones. Tell me, I entreat you, in what I can have displeased you; I, who not only love, but adore you, and esteem myself the happiest of all the princesses of my rank, for having so noble a prince as you are for my husband? Any other besides me would have a good opportunity of revenge by abandoning you to your luckless fate for so indignant an affront to my person; but even did I not love you as I do, I am too compassionate for the misfortunes even of those who are totally indifferent to me, not to warn you that the king, my father, is extremely irritated with your mode of proceeding; and that he only suspends his anger till tomorrow, when you will feel its just effects, if you continue this usage of me. I conjure you not to drive a princess to despair, who cannot avoid loving you."

This speech occasioned inexpressible embarrassment to the Princess Badoura. She could not doubt the sincerity of Haiatalnefous; the coolness which King Armanos had shown her on that day, fully proved his displeasure. The only method that occurred to her of justifying her conduct, was to confess her sex to Haiatalnefous. But although she had foreseen that she should be obliged to make this declaration, yet the uncertainty whether this princess would take it in good part made her tremble. But at last, when she reflected that if Prince Camaralzaman was still alive, he must necessarily stop at the Isle of Ebony, in his way to the dominions of Schahzaman, that she ought to preserve herself for him, and that she could only do it by discovering herself to the Princess Haiatalnefous, she hazarded this confession.

"As Badoura had remained silent and confused, Haiatalnefous becoming impatient, was going to continue, when she prevented her by these words: "Too amiable and charming princess," said she, "I confess I am in fault, and I freely condemn myself: but I hope you will pardon me, and that you will not violate the secret I am going to intrust you with for my justification." At the same moment Badoura uncovered her bosom. "See, princess," continued she, "if a woman and a princess such as you are yourself, does not deserve your pardon; I am persuaded you will grant it with good will when I shall have related to you my history; and above all, when you are made acquainted with the misfortune which has obliged me to act a deceitful part."

When the Princess Badoura had concluded her narration, and made herself known to the princess of the Isle of Ebony, she entreated her a second time not to betray her secret, and to agree to continue the deceit, and pretend that she was really her husband, until the arrival of Prince Camaralzaman, whom she hoped shortly to see again.

"Princess," replied Haiatalnefous, "it would indeed be a singular destiny, if so happy a union as yours has been should be of such short duration after a mutual affection, conceived and preserved with so many miraculous adventures. I join my wishes to yours, that Heaven may soon re-unite you. Be assured, in the meantime, that I will most religiously preserve the secret you have intrusted me with. I shall feel the greatest pleasure at being the only person in the great kingdom of the Isle of Ebony who really knows you,

while you govern it with the wisdom you have displayed at the commencement of your reign." I asked you to love me, but now I declare to you that I shall be fully satisfied if you do not refuse me your friendship." After this conversation the two princesses tenderly embraced, and with a thousand demonstrations of reciprocal friendship they lay down to rest.

It was a custom in this island that the consummation of royal marriages should be made known to the public. The princess, however, found some means of overcoming this difficulty; and not only the female attendants of the Princess Haiatalnefous were the next morning deceived, but also King Armanos, the queen, his consort, and his whole court. And from this time the Princess Badoura continued to govern the kingdom in great tranquillity, to the complete satisfaction of the king and all his subjects.

While these things were in this situation in the Isle of Ebony between the Princess Badoura and Haiatalnefous, King Armanos, the queen, the court, and the rest of the people in the kingdom, Prince Camaralzaman was still in the city of idolaters with the gardener who had offered him a retreat.

One morning very early, while the prince was preparing to work in the garden, as was his usual custom, the good old gardener prevented him. "The idolaters," said he to him, "have a grand festival to-day, and as they abstain from all kinds of labour, to pass it in public assemblies and rejoicings, they will not suffer Mussulmen either to work; and the latter, to preserve peace and amity with them, enter into their amusements, and are present at the various spectacles, which are well worthy of notice; so you may allow yourself a little rest to-day. I shall leave you here, and as the time approaches for the merchant vessel which I mentioned to you to sail for the Island of Ebony, I am going to see some friends, and will inquire of them what day it is to set sail, and at the same time I will arrange matters for your embarking in it." The gardener put on his best dress and went out.

When Prince Camaralzaman found himself alone, instead of partaking of the public rejoicings which enlivened the whole city, the state of inactivity he remained in brought to his mind in stronger colours the sad recollection of his ever-beloved princess. Absorbed by his melancholy reflections, he sighed and moaned as he walked along the garden, when the noise made by two birds, who had perched on a tree near him, attracting his attention, inclined him to lift up his head and stop.

Camaralzaman observed that these birds were fighting desperately, pecking each other with their beaks, and in a few minutes he saw one of them fall dead at the foot of a tree. The bird who remained conqueror resumed his flight, and soon disappeared.

At the same moment, two other birds of a larger size, who had seen the combat from a distance, arrived from a different quarter, and alighted, one at the head, the other at the feet of the deceased, looked at him for a considerable time, shaking their heads in a way which showed their grief, and then dug a grave for him with their claws, in which they buried him.

As soon as the birds had again filled the grave with the earth, they flew away, and a short time after returned, holding in their beaks, one by the wing, and the other by the claw, the criminal bird, who uttered dreadful screams, and made violent efforts to escape. They brought him to the grave of the bird he had in his rage destroyed, and there, sacrificing him to the just punishment he merited for the cruel murder he had committed, they deprived him of life by pecking him with their beaks. They then tore open his body, drew out the entrails, and leaving the corpse on the ground, flew away.

Camaralzaman remained in silent admiration the whole time this surprising

spectacle continued. He approached the tree where the scene had taken place, and casting his eyes on the entrails, which lay scattered on the ground, he perceived something red appearing out of the stomach of the bird that had been torn to pieces. He took up the mangled remains of the body, and taking out the red substance which had attracted his notice, he found it to be the talisman of the Princess Badoura, his dear and tenderly-beloved princess, which had cost him so much anxiety, pain, and regret, since this bird had flown away with it. "Cruel bird," cried he, looking at it, "you delighted in evil actions; and I have no little cause to complain of the grief you have occasioned me. But in proportion to what I have suffered through you, so much do I wish well to those who have avenged my injuries by revenging the death of their companion."

It is not possible to express the joy of Prince Camaralzaman at this adventure. "Dearest princess," he exclaimed again, "this fortunate moment, in which I thus redeem what is so valuable to you, is no doubt a happy presage, that announces my meeting with you in the same unexpected manner; and perhaps even sooner than I dare to hope. Blessed be the day in which I taste such happiness, and which at the same time flatters me with the delightful prospect of the greatest pleasure I can enjoy."

As he finished these words, Camaralzaman kissed the talisman, and, wrapping it up carefully, tied it round his arm. During his extreme affliction, he had passed almost every night without closing his eyes, and in the midst of tormenting reflections. He slept very tranquilly the whole of that which succeeded this happy event; and the next morning at break of day, putting on his working dress, he went to the gardener for his orders, who begged him to cut and root up a particular tree, which he pointed out to him, as being old, and no longer bearing fruit.

Camaralzaman took an axe and set to work. As he was cutting a part of the root, he struck something which seemed to resist, and made a loud noise. He removed the earth and discovered a large plate of brass, under which he found a staircase with ten steps. He immediately descended, and when he had reached the bottom, he saw himself in a sort of cave, or vault, about fifteen feet square, in which he counted fifty large bronze jars ranged round it, each with a cover. He uncovered them all, one after the other, and found them filled with gold dust. He then left the vault, quite overjoyed at having discovered so rich a treasure; he replaced the plate over the staircase, and continued to root up the tree, while he waited for the gardener's return.

The gardener had been informed on the preceding day that the vessel, which sailed annually to the Isle of Ebony, was to depart in a very few days; but those who had given him the intelligence, could not acquaint him with the precise day; they promised, however, to do so on the morrow. He had been to gain the information he wanted, and returned with a countenance which displayed the joy he felt at being the bearer of such good news to Camaralzaman. "My son," said he to him, for by his great age he claimed the privilege of addressing the prince in such familiar terms, "rejoice, and hold yourself in readiness to embark in three days; the vessel will sail on that day, without fail; and I have agreed with the captain about your passage and departure."

"In my present situation," replied Camaralzaman, "you could not announce to me anything of so agreeable a nature. But, in return, I have to communicate to you also a piece of news which will give you great pleasure. Take the trouble of following me, and you will see the good fortune that Heaven sends you." Camaralzaman conducted the gardener to the spot where he rooted up the tree, and made him go down into the vault; when he had

shown him the number of jars it contained, all filled with gold dust, he expressed his joy that God had thus recompensed his virtue, and all the fatigue and pain he had undergone for so many years.

"What do you mean?" replied the gardener. "Do you suppose, then, that I will possess myself of all this treasure? No, it is all your own; I have no pretensions to any part of it. During eighty years that I have worked in this garden since my father's death I have never chanced to discover it. It is a sign that it was destined for you alone, since God permitted you to find it; it is more appropriate to a prince like you than to me, who am on the brink of the grave, and want nothing more. God sends it you very opportunely at the time that you are about to return to the states which are to belong to you, and where you will make a good use of it."

Prince Camaralzaman would not give up to the gardener in generosity, and they had a great contest on this point. He at length solemnly protested that he would not touch any of the gold unless the gardener retained half for his share, to which he with some difficulty consented; and they divided the jars, twenty-five to each.

The division being made, "My son," said the gardener, "this is not enough; we must now devise some plan for embarking these riches on the vessel, and taking them with you so secretly as not to give any suspicion of them, otherwise you might run a risk of losing them. There are no olives in the Isle of Ebony, and those which are taken from here are in great request. As you know I have a good provision of those I have gathered from my own garden, you must take the fifty jars, and fill them half-way with the gold dust, and the other half with olives up to the top, and we will have them taken to the ship, when you yourself embark."

Camaralzaman adopted this advice, and employed himself the rest of the day in filling and arranging the fifty jars; and as he feared that he might lose the talisman of the Princess Badoura by wearing it constantly on his arm, he had the precaution to put it in one of these jars, on which he set a mark, to know it again. When he had completed his work, and the jars were ready for removal, as night was approaching, he went home with the gardener, and entering into conversation with him, related the battle of the two birds, and the circumstances attending this adventure, by which he had recovered the talisman of the Princess Badoura; the gardener was not less surprised than rejoiced at this account, for his sake.

Whether it was on account of his great age, or that he had taken too much exercise on that day, the gardener passed a bad night; this illness increased on the following day, and on the third morning he found himself still worse. As soon as it was day, the captain of the vessel himself, together with some of his seamen, came and knocked at the garden-gate. Camaralzaman opened it, and they inquired for the passenger who was to embark on board their vessel. "I am he," replied the prince; "the gardener, who took my passage, is ill, and cannot speak to you; however, pray come in, and take away these jars of olives, together with my baggage, and I will follow you as soon as I have taken my leave of him."

The seamen carried away his jars and baggage, and on leaving Camaralzaman, desired him to follow them immediately: "The wind is fair," added the captain, "and I only wait for you to set sail."

As soon as the captain and seamen were gone, Camaralzaman returned to the gardener, to bid him farewell, and thank him for all the good offices he had received from him; but he found him at the point of death, and he had scarcely obtained from him the profession of his faith, according to the custom of good Mussulmen, on the article of death, than he saw him expire.

The prince, being under the necessity of embarking immediately, used the utmost diligence in performing the last duties to the deceased. He washed the body, wrapped it in the sepulchral clothes, and having dug a grave in the garden (for as Mahometans were barely tolerated in the city of idolaters, they had no public cemetery), he buried it himself, which employed him till the close of the day. He then set out, without losing any more time, to embark; and to use great despatch, he took the key of the garden with him, intending to deliver it to the proprietor, or if he could not accomplish that, to give it to some trusty person, in the presence of witnesses, to remit it to him. But when arrived at the harbour, he was informed that the ship had weighed anchor some time, and it was already out of sight. They added that it had waited for him three full hours before it set sail.

Camaralzaman was vexed and distressed to the utmost degree, at finding himself obliged to remain in a country where he had no wish to form any acquaintance, and to wait another year before the opportunity he had just lost would again present itself. What mortified him still more was, that he had parted with the talisman of the Princess Badoura, which he now gave up for lost. He had no other method to pursue but return to the garden he had left, to rent it of the landlord to whom it belonged, and to continue the cultivation of it, while he deplored his misfortune. As he could not support the fatigue of all the labour it required, he hired a boy to assist him; and that he might not lose the other share of the treasure, which came to him by the death of the gardener, who had died without heirs, he put the gold-dust into fifty other jars, and covered them with olives, as he had done before, that he might take them with him when the time came for him to embark.

While Prince Camaralzaman was beginning another year of pain, sorrow, and impatience, the vessel continued its voyage with a favourable wind, and arrived without any misfortune at the capital of the Isle of Ebony.

As the palace was on the sea-shore, the new king, or rather the Princess Badoura, who perceived the vessel while sailing into port, with all its flags flying, inquired what ship it was, and was told that it came every year from the city of idolaters at that season, and that it was in general laden with very rich merchandise.

The princess, who, in the midst of all the state and splendour that surrounded her, had her mind constantly occupied with the idea of Camaralzaman, conceived that he might have embarked on board that vessel, and the thought occurred to her of going to meet him when he landed, not intending to make herself known to him, for she was convinced he would not recognise her, but to observe him, and take the measures she thought most proper for their mutual discovery. Under pretence, therefore, of inspecting the merchandise, and even of being the first to see and to choose the most valuable for herself, she ordered a horse to be brought her. She went to the harbour, accompanied by several officers who happened to be with her, and she arrived at the moment that the captain came on shore. She desired him to come to her, and inquired of him from whence he had sailed, how long he had been at sea, what good or unfortunate incidents he had met with during his voyage, if he had amongst his passengers any stranger of distinction, and above all, with what his vessel was laden.

The captain gave satisfactory answers to all these questions; as for the passengers, he assured her there were none besides the merchants who were accustomed to trade hither; and that they bought very rich stuffs from different countries, linens of the finest texture, painted as well as plain, precious stones, musk, ambergris, camphor, civet, spices, medicinal drugs, olives, and several other articles.

The Princess Badoura happened to be passionately fond of olives. She had no sooner heard them mentioned, than she said to the captain, "I will take all you have on board; order them to be unladen immediately, that I may bargain for them. As for the other merchandise, you will inform the owners to bring me the most beautiful and valuable of their goods, before they show them to any one."

"Sire," replied the captain, who took her for the king of the Isle of Ebony, which in fact she was, in her feigned character, "there are fifty large jars of olives; but they belong to a merchant who remained behind. I had informed him of my departure, and even waited for him some time; but as I found he did not come, and that his delay prevented my profiting by a favourable wind, I lost all patience, and set sail." "Let them be put ashore, nevertheless," replied the princess; "this shall not prevent our making the bargain."

The captain sent his boat to the ship, and it soon returned, bringing the jars of olives. The princess inquired what the value of the fifty jars might be in the Isle of Ebony. "Sire," replied the captain "the merchant is very poor; your majesty will confer a great obligation on him by giving him a thousand pieces of silver." "That he may be perfectly satisfied," said the princess, "and in consideration of his great poverty, you shall have a thousand pieces of gold counted out to you, which you will take care to give him." She gave orders for the payment of this sum, and after she had desired the jars to be taken away, she returned to the palace.

As night approached, the Princess Badoura retired to the interior palace, and went to the apartment of the Princess Haiatalnefous, where she had the fifty jars of olives brought to her. She had opened one, to taste them, and to eat of them herself, and poured some into a dish, when conceive her astonishment at finding the olives mixed with gold dust. "What a wonderful adventure!" exclaimed she. She immediately ordered the other jars to be opened, and emptied in her presence, by the women of Haiatalnefous; and her surprise increased, as she perceived that the olives in each jar were mixed with the gold dust. But when that was emptied in which Camaralzamar had deposited the talisman, her emotions on seeing it were so strong, that she was quite overcome, and fainted away.

The Princess Haiatalnefous and her women ran to her assistance, and by throwing water on her face, at length brought her to herself. When she had recovered her senses, she took up the talisman, and kissed it several times; but as she did not choose to say anything before the princess's women, who were ignorant of her disguise, and as it was time to retire to rest, she dismissed them. "Princess," said she to Haiatalnefous, as soon as they were alone, "after what I have related to you of my adventures, you no doubt guessed that it was on beholding this talisman that I fainted. It is mine, and the fatal cause of the separation that has taken place between my beloved husband and myself. It was the occasion of an event so painful for both, and I am certain its discovery will be the means of our speedy re-union."

The next morning, as soon as day had appeared, the Princess Badoura sent for the captain of the vessel. When he was come, she said to him, "I beg you to give me a more satisfactory account of the merchant to whom the olives belonged, that I bought yesterday. I think you told me that you left him behind in the city of idolaters; can you inform me what was his occupation there?"

"Sire," replied the captain, "I can acquaint your majesty with it, as I know it for certain. I had agreed about his passage with a gardener, who was extremely old; and he told me that I should find him in his garden, the situation of which he pointed out to me, where he worked under him. This

made me say to your majesty that he was poor. I went to this very garden, to seek him, and tell him that I was going to embark, and spoke to him myself."

"If this be the case," said the princess, "you must set sail again to-day, and return to the city of idolaters, to search for this young gardener, and bring him here, for he is my debtor. If you refuse, I declare that I will confiscate, not only all the goods which belong to you, and those of the merchants you have on board, but will also make your life and that of the merchants responsible for it. At this moment they are going by my command to place the seal on the magazines where they are deposited, and which shall not be taken off until you have delivered into my hands the young man I require. This is what I had to say to you. Go, and obey my orders."

The captain had nothing to reply to this command, the non-execution of which was to involve him and the merchants in so severe a punishment. He imparted it to them, and they were no less anxious than himself for the immediate departure of the vessel; he stored it with water and provisions for the voyage, which was done with so much expedition, that he set sail on that very day.

The ship had a very good voyage, and the captain managed so well as to arrive by night at the city of idolaters. When he was as near land as he thought necessary, he did not cast anchor, but while the vessel lay to, he got into his boat and rowed to shore at a spot a little distance from the harbour, from whence he went to the garden of Camaralzaman, accompanied by six of his most resolute seamen. The prince was not asleep; his separation from the beautiful princess of China overwhelmed him as usual with affliction, and he detested and cursed the moment when he had suffered himself to be tempted by curiosity even to touch, much more to examine her girdle. He passed in this manner the hours which should have been dedicated to repose, when he heard a knocking at the gate of the garden. He went half dressed to open it, and he had scarcely presented himself, when the captain and sailors, without speaking a word, seized and conducted him by main force to the boat, and took him to the ship, which set sail again as soon as they had re-embarked.

Camaralzaman, who had till then preserved a profound silence, as well as the captain and seamen, now asked the captain, whose features he recollected, what reason he had for dragging him away with so much violence. "Are you not a debtor to the king of the Island of Ebony?" inquired the captain in his turn. "I, a debtor to the king of the Island of Ebony!" exclaimed Camaralzaman, with amazement, "I do not know him, I never had any dealings with him, nor even ever set my foot in his dominions." "You must know that matter better than I can," replied the captain, "but you will speak to him yourself: however, remain here quietly, and have patience."

The vessel had as successful a voyage in conducting Camaralzaman to the Isle of Ebony, as it had experienced in going for him to the city of idolaters. Although night had closed when they got into port, the captain nevertheless did not delay going on shore to take Prince Camaralzaman to the palace, where he requested to be presented to the king.

The Princess Badoura, who had already retired into the inner palace, was no sooner informed of his return, and of the arrival of Camaralzaman, than she went out to speak to him. As soon as she had cast her eyes on her beloved prince, for whom she had shed so many tears since their separation, she instantly recognised him even in his labourer's dress. As for the prince, who trembled in the presence of a king, as he believed him to be, to whom he was to answer for an imaginary debt, he had not the least idea that he was then in her presence, whom he desired so ardently to rejoin. Had the princess fol-

lowed her inclination, she would have run to him, and discovered herself by her tender embraces ; but she restrained her emotions, as she thought it for the interest of both that she should continue to sustain the character of king for some time longer, before she made herself known. She contented herself with recommending him particularly to the care of an officer who was present, charging him to be attentive, and treat him well until the following day.

When the Princess Badoura had ordered everything that related to Prince Camaralzaman, she turned towards the captain, to recompense him for the important service he had rendered her, by desiring another officer to go immediately and take off the seal which had been placed on his merchandise, as well as that of the merchants, and dismissed him with a present of a rich and precious diamond, which fully repaid him the expense of the second voyage. She told him also that he might keep the thousand pieces of gold which had been paid for the jars of olives, and that she should know how to settle the matter with the merchant he had just brought her.

She at length returned to the apartment of the princess of the Isle of Ebony, to whom she related the subject of her joy, begging her nevertheless not to disclose the secret, and intrusting her with the measures she thought it necessary to adopt, before she discovered herself to Prince Camaralzaman, or acknowledged who he himself was. "There is," added she, "so great a distance between the rank of a great prince as he is, and that of a gardener, that there might be some danger attending his passing from one of the lowest degrees of the people to the very highest, however justice might demand such an act." Far from being faithless to her promise, the princess of the Isle of Ebony concurred with her in the design she had formed. She even assured her that she would contribute all in her power to forward it, if she would inform her of what she wished her to do.

The next day, the princess of China, under the name, habit, and authority of king of the Isle of Ebony, after taking care to have Prince Camaralzaman conducted to the bath very early in the morning, and dressed in the robe of an emir, or governor of a province, introduced him into the council, where he attracted the attention of all the nobles who were present, by his elegant and majestic air, and well-formed person.

The Princess Badoura herself was charmed to see him again as amiable as he had so often appeared to her ; and she felt additional interest in extolling him to the council. After he had taken his place in the rank of emirs, according to her directions, "My lords," said she, addressing the other emirs, "Camaralzaman, whom I this day present to you as your colleague, is not unworthy of the situation he occupies amongst you. I have had sufficient experience of his worth in my travels, to be able to answer for him, and I can assure you that he will make himself known to, and admired by you, as much for his valour and a thousand other good and amiable qualities, as by the superior greatness of his mind."

Camaralzaman was extremely surprised when he heard the king of the Isle of Ebony, whom he little suspected to be a woman, much less his adored princess, call him by his name, and assure the assembly that he knew him, when he was himself convinced that he had never met him in any place : he was still more astonished at the unexpected praise the king bestowed on him.

This praise, however, although pronounced by royal lips, did not disconcert him ; he received it with a modesty that proved he deserved it, but that it did not excite his vanity. He prostrated himself before the throne of the king, and when he arose, he said, "Sire, I cannot find words to express my thanks to your majesty for the great honour you have conferred on me, much less for all your kindness. I will exert myself to the utmost of my abilities to serve both the one and the other."

When he left the council, the prince was conducted by an officer to a large mansion, which the Princess Badoura had already ordered to be furnished, and prepared for his reception. He there found officers and servants ready to receive his commands, and a stable filled with very fine horses, the whole suited to the dignity of an emir, which had just been conferred on him; and when he went into his closet, his steward presented him with a coffer full of gold for his expenses. The less he was able to guess from what quarter this good fortune came, the greater was his surprise and admiration; but he never entertained the least suspicion that it was his own princess who was the cause of the whole.

At the end of two or three days, the Princess Badoura, to afford Camaralzaman more frequent access to her person, as well as to raise him to higher distinction, bestowed on him the office of grand treasurer, which had become vacant. He acquitted himself in this new office with so much integrity, at the same time conferring obligations on every one, that he acquired not only the friendship of all the nobles about the court, but also won the hearts of the common people by his rectitude and generosity.

Camaralzaman would have been the happiest of men to find himself in such high favour with a king, who, as he supposed, was an entire stranger to him, and thus to obtain the esteem of every one, which daily increased, had he possessed his princess also. But in the midst of all his splendour he never ceased lamenting the loss of his princess, and that he could gain no information respecting her in a country where he concluded she must have passed some time, since he had been separated from her by an accident so unfortunate for both. He might have suspected something if the princess Badoura had retained the name of Camaralzaman, which she assumed with his dress. But when she ascended the throne, she changed it for that of Armanos, in compliment to the former king, her father-in-law, so that she was now known only by the name of King Armanos the younger, and there were only a few courtiers who remembered the name of Camaralzaman, which she bore on her first arrival at the Island of Ebony. Camaralzaman had not yet had sufficient intercourse with them to learn this circumstance, but he might in the end have been informed of it.

As the Princess Badoura feared that it might so happen, and as she wished Camaralzaman to be indebted to her only for the discovery, she resolved at length to put an end to her own torments, and to those she well knew he suffered. In fact, she had remarked, that whenever she conversed with him on the affairs relating to his office, he frequently heaved deep sighs which could only be silent addresses to her. She herself lived in a state of constant restraint, which she was determined to put a period to without further delay. Besides which, the friendship of the nobles, the zeal and affection of the people, everything contributed to persuade her that the crown of the Island of Ebony might be placed on his head without any obstacle.

The Princess Badoura had no sooner formed this resolution, in concert with the Princess Hiaitalnefous, than she spoke to Prince Camaralzaman, in private, on the same day. "Camaralzaman," said she, "I wish to converse with you on an affair which will require some discussion, and on which I want your advice. As I think I cannot do it more conveniently than at night, come to me this evening; tell your people not to wait for you, and I will provide you with a bed."

Camaralzaman did not fail to repair to the palace at the hour appointed by the princess. She took him with her into the inner palace, and having told the chief of the eunuchs, who was preparing to follow her, that she did not require his attendance, and that he had only to keep the door fastened, she

conducted him into a different apartment from that of the Princess Haiatalnefous, in which she was accustomed to sleep.

When the prince and princess were in a chamber, which contained a bed, and had fastened the door, the princess took the talisman out of a little box, and presented it to Camaralzaman. "It is not long since an astrologer gave me this talisman," said she, "and as I know you to be well informed in every science, you perhaps can tell me its peculiar properties." Camaralzaman took the talisman, and approached a light to examine it. He no sooner recognised it, than with a degree of surprise which delighted the princess, he exclaimed, "Ah, sire, your majesty asks me the properties of this talisman? Alas! its properties are such as to make me die with grief and sadness, if I do not shortly find the most charming and amiable princess that was ever beheld under heaven, to whom this talisman belonged, and which was the cause of my losing her. The adventure was of so singular a nature, that the recital of it would excite your majesty's compassion for a husband and a lover so unfortunate as I am, if you would have the patience to listen to it."

"You will relate it to me some other time," replied the princess; "but I am very happy," added she, "to tell you that I know something concerning it: wait for me here, I will return in a moment."

Saying this, the princess went into a closet, where she took off the royal turban, and having in a few minutes put on a woman's dress, together with the girdle she wore on the day of their separation, she returned to the chamber where she had left the prince.

Camaralzaman instantly knew his dear princess. He ran to her, and embracing her with the utmost tenderness, "Ah," cried he, "how much I am obliged to the king for having surprised me so agreeably." "Do not expect to see the king again," replied the princess, embracing him in her turn, and with tears in her eyes; "in me you behold the king. Sit down, that I may explain to you this enigma."

They seated themselves, and the princess related to Camaralzaman the resolution she had formed in the plain, where they had encamped together for the last time, when she discovered that she waited for him in vain; in what manner she had executed it until her arrival at the Isle of Ebony, where she had been obliged to marry the Princess Haiatalnefous, and to accept the crown, which King Armanos had offered her in consequence of the marriage; that the princess, of whose merits she spoke in enthusiastic terms, had received the declaration she had made of her sex in a favourable manner; and at last acquainted him with the adventure of the talisman, found in one of the jars of olives and gold dust which she had purchased, and which had induced her to send for him to the city of idolaters.

When the Princess Badoura had concluded, she begged the prince to inform her by what accident the talisman had occasioned his departure; he satisfied her curiosity, and when he had finished, he complained to her, in an affectionate manner, of her cruelty in making him languish so long a time. She gave him the reasons we have already heard, after which, as the night was far advanced, they went to bed.

They arose the next morning as soon as it was day; the princess no longer wore the royal robe, but resumed her own dress, and when she was ready, she despatched the chiefs of the eunuchs to request King Armanos, her father-in-law, to take the trouble of coming to her apartment.

When King Armanos arrived, he was very much surprised to see a lady who was totally unknown to him, and the grand treasurer, who was not allowed to enter the inner palace any more than the other nobles belonging to the court. When he had taken his seat, he inquired for the king.

"Sire," replied the princess, "yesterday I was king; to-day I am nothing

more than the princess of China, the wife of the true Prince Camaralzaman, who is the true son of King Schahzaman. If your majesty will have the patience to listen to our separate histories, I flatter myself you will not condemn me for having conceived and continued a deceit of so innocent a nature." King Armanos granted her an audience, and listened to her with the utmost astonishment, from beginning to end.

When she had concluded the history of their adventures, "Sire," added she, "although the liberty granted by our religion to men to have several wives is not very agreeable to our sex, yet if your majesty will consent to give the Princess Haiatalnefous, your daughter, in marriage to Prince Camaralzaman. I will cheerfully resign the rank and quality of queen, which properly belongs to her, and will myself be content with the second rank. Even if this preference were not her due, I should have insisted on her accepting it, after the obligation I am under to her, for having so generously kept the secret with which I intrusted her. If your majesty's determination depends upon her consent, I have already obtained that, and am certain she will be happy."

King Armanos listened with every mark of admiration to this discourse of the Princess Badoura; and when she had finished speaking, he turned to Prince Camaralzaman, "My son," said he to him, "since the Princess Badoura, your wife, whom I had hitherto considered as my son-in-law, in consequence of a deception, which I know not how to complain of, has offered to share your bed with my daughter, I have nothing to do but to inquire if you also are willing to marry her, and will accept the crown, which the Princess Badoura would well deserve to wear for the rest of her life, if she did not prefer resigning it through her love for you." "Sire," replied Camaralzaman, "however strong my desire of seeing the king, my father, may be, the obligations I owe to your majesty and to the Princess Haiatalnefous are so great and powerful, that I cannot refuse you anything."

Camaralzaman was proclaimed king, and married the same day with the greatest magnificence; and he was thoroughly satisfied with the beauty, wit, and affection of the Princess Haiatalnefous.

The two queens continued to live together in the same friendship and union which they had hitherto done, and were each well contented with the equality which King Camaralzaman observed in his conduct towards them, in sharing his bed with them alternately.

They each presented him with a son in the same year, and nearly at the same period, and the birth of the two princes was celebrated by public rejoicings. Camaralzaman gave the name of Amgiad, or "the most glorious," to the first, whom the Queen Badoura had borne; and that of Assad, or "the most happy," to him whom the Queen Haiatalnefous had brought into the world.



THE HISTORY OF PRINCE AMGIAD AND OF PRINCE ASSAD.

THESE two princes were brought up with the greatest care. When they were of a proper age they had each the same governor, and the same masters in all those sciences and branches of the polite arts, in which King Camaralzaman wished them to excel. The same person also taught them both the same personal exercises. The great regard they showed for each other even from their infancy produced a certain uniformity in all their thoughts and actions, which tended still further to augment their friendship.

When they were far enough advanced in years for each of them to have a separate house and establishment, they were so strongly attached to each other that they requested their father to suffer them to have but one between them.

They obtained their wishes, and had the same officers appointed for each, the same attendants, the same equipage, the same apartments, and the same table. Camaralzaman indeed insensibly placed so implicit a confidence both in their ability and their ideas of rectitude, that when they were about nineteen years old he did not hesitate to appoint them alternately to preside at the council, whenever he was for a few days engaged in hunting.

As these two princes were of equal beauty both in face and person, and had always been esteemed so from their infancy, the two queens felt an almost incredible attachment to them; yet it nevertheless happened that the Princess Badoura had a greater affection for Assad, the son of Queen Haiatalnefous, than she had for Amgiad, her own son: and in the same manner Queen Haiatalnefous was much fonder of Amgiad than she was of her own son Assad.

The queens each thought at first that this affection only proceeded from the great friendship they had for each other. But as the princes advanced in age, this regard, which commenced in friendship, changed to a more tender feeling, and at length became the most violent love. The princes indeed appeared in their eyes possessed of so many accomplishments that they were absolutely blinded and led away by their charms. The infamy of such a passion was well known to them, and they made the greatest efforts to resist it: but the freedom and familiarity with which they saw the princes every day, and the continued habit they always had of admiring and caressing them from their earliest infancy, inflamed their passions to such a degree that they could get no rest. To heighten their misfortune, as well as that of the princes, the latter had not, so much were they ever accustomed to their manners, the slightest suspicion of this hateful and horrid attachment.

As the two queens had not intrusted each other with the secret of their passion, and as neither of them had the audacity openly to make a declaration of it in person to the prince whom she loved, they both agreed, though unknown to each other, to explain it by letter; and in order to execute this fatal design, they took advantage of the absence of King Camaralzaman, who was gone for a few days on a hunting party.

The day after the king's departure, Prince Amgiad presided at the council, and was employed two or three hours in the afternoon in hearing complaints and administering justice. As he came out from the council, and was going back to the palace, a eunuch took him aside, and gave him a letter from Queen Haiatalnefous. Amgiad immediately opened it, and read its contents with the greatest degree of horror. "What," cried he to the eunuch, the moment he had perused it, and drawing his sabre, "is this the fidelity you owe to your king and master?" And in saying this he struck off his head.

He had no sooner done this, than Amgiad went in a violent rage to find his mother, Queen Badoura, and with an air that plainly showed his anger, held out the letter to her, and informed her of the contents, first telling her from whom it came. Instead, however, of listening to him, the queen herself began to be angry. "Be assured, my son," she replied, "that what you tell me is nothing but a calumnious falsehood. Queen Haiatalnefous is both prudent and wise, and indeed I consider it a great act of boldness in you to speak against her with so much insolence." To this speech of the queen, the prince said, "You are both equally wicked, and were it not for the respect I owe to the king, my father, this day should be the last which Haiatalnefous has to live."

From the manner in which Prince Amgiad conducted himself Queen Badoura might easily judge what she had to expect from Prince Assad, who was equally virtuous, and who would not therefore receive her similar declaration with more favour, which she intended to make to him. This, however, did not prevent her from pursuing her detestable plan; the next day, therefore,

she wrote a letter to him, which she intrusted to an old woman, who had free admission into the palace.

This old woman chose the moment that Prince Assad left the council, where he went to preside in turn, as a proper opportunity to execute her commission. The prince took the letter, and without even giving himself time to finish the perusal of it, he was so transported with rage, that he drew his sabre, and slew the old woman, as she deserved. He then ran to the apartment of Queen Haiatalnefous, his mother, with the letter in his hand. He was going to show it her, but she did not give him time, either for that or even to open his lips. "I know what you want of me," she cried, "but you are equally as impertinent as your brother Amgiad. Away; and never again appear in my presence."

Assad was in the utmost astonishment at these words, for which he was totally unprepared; and they put him into so violent a rage, that he was upon the point of showing the most direful marks of it. He, however, had the resolution to restrain himself, and retired without a reply, lest anything should escape him unworthy his own greatness of soul. As Prince Amgiad had not mentioned his having received a letter the day before, Assad went to his brother to chide him for his silence, and to mingle his own grief with his; for from what his own mother said, he easily conjectured she was not less criminal than Queen Hadoura.

The two queens were driven almost to desperation at finding the princes possessed of so much virtue; and instead of awakening to a sense of their duty, they renounced every natural and maternal feeling, and consulted together how they should be able to destroy their sons. They made their women believe that the princes had endeavoured to violate their persons, and attempted to pass off this trick for a reality by the tears they shed, as well as the lamentations and invectives they uttered. They went and slept in the same bed, as if the resistance they thus pretended to have made had driven them to the greatest distress.

When King Camaralzaman returned the next day from the chase, he was in great astonishment at finding the two queens in bed together, bathed in tears, and in a condition they had so well feigned, as to excite his utmost compassion. He eagerly inquired of them what had happened to them.

To this question the cunning queens only answered by redoubling their sighs and groans, when, at length, after the greatest entreaty, Queen Hadoura broke silence and said, "Considering, sire, the deep yet proper grief with which we are afflicted, we ought not even to expose ourselves to the light of the sun, after the outrage which the princes, your sons, with a brutality almost without example, have attempted. By a conspiracy, altogether unworthy of their illustrious birth, they have had the boldness and insolence, during your absence, to attempt our honour. We entreat your majesty not to make any further inquiries, our grief is sufficient to explain the rest."

The king then ordered the two princes to be called, and would absolutely have killed them with his own hand, if old King Armanos, his father-in-law, who happened to be present, had not prevented him. "What, my son," he cried out, "are you going to do? Do you wish to imbrue your hands, nay your very palace, with your own blood? There are other means of punishing them, if they are really guilty of any crime." In this manner he endeavoured to appease him, and entreated him thoroughly to examine whether it was quite certain they had committed the crime which was laid to their charge.

It was no difficult task for Camaralzaman so far to get the better of his rage as to refrain from being the executioner of his own children. Having,

however, ordered them to be arrested, he desired an emir, called Giondar, to come in the evening to him; and he then commanded him to conduct the princes to the outside of the city, in what part, and to any distance he pleased, and there to take their lives. As a proof also of having executed the orders he thus received, Giondar was not to return without their clothes.

Giondar continued travelling the whole night; and the next morning, as he got off his horse, he informed the princes, with tears in his eyes, of the order he had received. "This command, princes," said he to them, "is most cruel; and to me it is a mortification of the most painful kind, to have been chosen for the executioner. I wish to God that I could avoid it." "Do your duty," replied they; "we know well enough that you are not the cause of our death, and sincerely pardon you." In saying this, they embraced and took an eternal farewell of each other with so much tenderness and affection, that it was a long time before they could separate. Prince Assad was then the first who prepared himself to receive his death from the hands of Giondar. "Begin with me," said he, "that I may not have the grief of seeing my dear brother Amgiad expire." Amgiad opposed this plan, and Giondar was unable, without renewed tears, to witness their amiable contest, which so evidently proved the sincerity and strength of their mutual affection.

This interesting dispute was at last terminated by their entreating Giondar to bind them both together, and place them in such a way that they might, both as nearly as possible, receive their death at the same moment. "Do not refuse," they said to him, "to afford two unfortunate brothers the consolation of dying together, who have, not excepting even their innocence in this affair, from their earliest infancy, possessed everything in common." Giondar granted the two princes what they wished. He bound them, and having placed them, as he thought, in the most convenient manner to strike off both their heads at one blow, he asked them if they had any request to make to him before their death. "There is only one thing," answered the princes, "which we wish you to do; and that is, to assure the king, our father, upon your return, that we die innocent; but that we nevertheless do not impute to him the crime of shedding our blood. We know, indeed, that he is not acquainted with the truth of what we are accused." Giondar promised not to fail doing what they desired, and at the same instant drew out his scimitar; his horse, who was fastened to a tree, alarmed at this action, and also at the glittering of the blade, broke his bridle, and began to gallop over the country at full speed.

This horse was very valuable, and also very richly caparisoned, and Giondar did not at all like the thoughts of losing him. Vexed, therefore, at this accident, instead of cutting off the heads of the princes, he threw down his scimitar and ran after his horse, endeavouring to catch him. The horse, who was both vigorous and playful, galloped about for some time just before Giondar, and led him, by the pursuit, close to a wood, into which he ran. The emir followed him, when the neighing of the horse disturbed a lion, who was asleep. The lion instantly roused himself, but instead of pursuing the horse he ran directly at Giondar as soon as he perceived him.

He then thought no more of his horse, but was in the greatest distress how to save his own life. He endeavoured to avoid the attack of the lion, who never lost sight of him, and kept pursuing him among the trees. "God," said he to himself in this extremity, "would not have inflicted this punishment upon me, if the princes, whom I have been ordered to kill, were not innocent. Unfortunately too, I have not my scimitar to defend myself with."

During the absence of Giondar, the two princes experienced the most burning thirst, brought on by the fear of death, which they felt, notwithstanding their manly and generous resolution to submit to the cruel order of their father.

Prince Amgiad then observed to his brother that they were not far from a spring of water, and proposed to him to unbind themselves, and go and drink. "It is not worth the trouble, my brother," said Assad, "to quench our thirst for the few moments we have to live: we shall have to support it only for a short time longer." Without, however, paying any attention to this speech, Amgiad unbound both himself and his brother, though against the inclination of the latter. They went to the spring, and when they had thus refreshed themselves, they heard the roaring of the lion, accompanied by the most piercing cries, issue from the wood, into which Giondar had run after his horse. Amgiad instantly took up the scimitar which Giondar had thrown down. "Brother," he cried out, "let us hasten to the assistance of the unfortunate Giondar; perhaps we may arrive in time to deliver him from the danger in which he seems to be."

The two princes lost no time; and they arrived at the very instant in which the lion had pulled Giondar down to the ground. No sooner did the animal observe Prince Amgiad approaching with the scimitar in his hand, than he let his prey go, and ran at him with the greatest fury. The prince waited to receive him with intrepidity and coolness, and gave him a blow with so much strength and skill, that the lion fell instantly dead at his feet.

As soon as Giondar perceived that he was indebted for his life to the two princes, he threw himself at their feet, and thanked them for the great favour and assistance they had shown him, in a manner that evinced the strongest gratitude. "Princes," said he to them, when he got up, while his tears fell upon their hands, "God forbid that I should ever attempt to take your lives, after the essential help you have afforded me in saving my own. It shall never be said, that the emir Giondar was capable of such black ingratitude."

"The service we have done you," replied the princes, "ought by no means to prevent you from executing your orders. Go and take your horse, and let us return to the spot where you left us." They had now no difficulty in catching the horse, whose spirit was much abated, and who stopped of himself. In spite, however, of everything they could urge to Giondar, as they were returning towards the spring, either by entreaty or prayer, they could not persuade him to be the instrument of their death. "The only thing that I take the liberty to ask of you," said he, "and which I beg you not to refuse, is to accommodate yourselves as well as you can with my clothes between you, and to let me have yours; and then to save yourselves at such a distance, that the king, your father, may never again even hear your names mentioned."

The princes at length complied with all his wishes; and after having given him both their dresses, they put on as much as he could spare of his clothes. Giondar then obliged them to take whatever money he had about him, and departed.

After the emir had left the princes, he passed through the wood, where he dipped their clothes in the blood of the lion, and then continued his way to the capital of the Isle of Ebony. On his arrival, King Camaralzaman asked him if he had faithfully executed the orders he had received. "Sire," replied Giondar, presenting the bloody habits of the two princes to him, "behold the proofs." "Inform me," said the king, "in what manner they behaved on suffering the punishment I ordered to be inflicted on them." "They received it, sire," answered Giondar, "with the most exemplary fortitude; and with such perfect resignation to the decrees of God, as fully proves the sincerity of their belief in their religion. Above all, they showed towards your majesty the greatest respect, and most entire submission to your order for their deaths. 'We die innocent,' they exclaimed; 'but we do not murmur at our fate. We receive our death from the hands of God, and we heartily forgive the king, our

father. We well know he is ignorant of the truth!" Camaralzaman was sensibly affected at the account given by Giondar. He then thought he would examine the clothes of his sons, and began by feeling in the pockets of Amgiad, where he found a letter, which he opened and read. No sooner did he discover, not only by the handwriting, but by a small lock of hair which was withinside, that it came from Queen Haiatalnefous, than he absolutely groaned aloud. He then with trembling hands examined those of Prince Assad, and finding there the letter of Queen Badoura, his astonishment had such a violent and sudden effect upon him that he fainted.

Never did any one show greater signs of grief than did Camaralzaman, when he recovered his senses. "What have you been guilty of, O barbarous father?" he exclaimed, "you have even destroyed your own offspring. Innocent sons! could not your sense, your modesty, your obedience, your entire submission to his wishes, nor even your virtues, defend you from his rage? Blind, misguided parent, do you think that the earth ought even to bear you after so execrable a crime? I have brought this abomination on myself, and it is the punishment which God has inflicted upon me for not persevering in my hatred against women, which I possessed from my very birth. I will not, ye detestable women, wash away your crime with your blood; no, you are not even worthy of my anger: but may Heaven itself pour destruction on my head, if ever I see you again!"

The king kept his oath most religiously. He ordered on the very same day the two queens to be each conveyed to a separate apartment, where they always remained well guarded; and during the rest of his life he never went near them.

While Camaralzaman was thus afflicting himself for the loss of the princes, his sons, of which he was himself the cause by his too precipitate conduct, the two princes wandered about the most desert places, endeavouring to avoid every trace of human habitations, for fear of meeting with any living being. They supported themselves upon herbs and wild fruits, and drank only bad rain-water, which they found in the excavations and holes of rocks; when night approached they slept only by turns, in order to guard against wild beasts.

At the end of about a month, they came to the foot of a dreadful steep mountain, composed entirely of a sort of black stone; and, as it appeared to them, quite inaccessible. At length, however, they perceived a path; but they found it so narrow and difficult, that they durst not attempt to pursue it. Through the hopes of discovering another less rugged and steep, they kept coasting, as it were, round the foot of the mountain, for about five days. All the trouble, however, that they took, was to no purpose; and they were compelled to return to the same path they had at first neglected. It appeared to them so absolutely impracticable, that they took a long time to consult whether they should attempt to ascend it or not. They at last encouraged each other, and began to mount.

The farther they advanced, the higher and steeper the mountain seemed to be; and they were more than once tempted to abandon their enterprise. As soon as either perceived that the other was tired, he stopped; and they took breath together. Sometimes they were both so fatigued, that all their strength failed them; they then gave up all thoughts of proceeding, and expected to die through weariness, and the consequences of exertion. Then again in a little time, as their strength returned, they acquired fresh courage, animated each other, and resumed their way.

In spite, however, of all their diligence, their perseverance, and their exertions, they were unable to reach the summit while it was day. Night overtook them, and Prince Assad found himself so fatigued and worn out, that he suddenly stopped. "My dear brother," he said to Amgiad, "I can go no further; but

must die in this spot." "Let us rest ourselves here," replied Amgiad, stopping at the same time, "as long as you please, and get fresh courage and strength. You may observe that we have not much farther to ascend; and the moon will favour our progress."

After having rested for above half an hour, Assad made a fresh effort; and they arrived at the summit of the mountain, where they again sat down for some time. Amgiad was the first to rise, and going a little forward, he observed a tree at a short distance. He went up, and found it to be a pomegranate-tree, the branches of which were almost borne down with the weight of the fruit. A fountain, or small stream, also washed the foot of the tree. He instantly ran to inform Assad of this good news, and led him to the border of the fountain under the tree. They refreshed themselves very much by eating a pomegranate, and then fell asleep.

The next morning, when the prince awoke, Amgiad said to Assad, "Let us proceed, brother, on our way; I see this mountain is much less rugged and steep on this side, than it was on the other, and we have now only to descend." Assad, however, was so fatigued with the labours of the preceding day, that it required at least three days for him entirely to recover. They passed this time in conversation, as they had done on similar occasions; all their discourse, however, constantly related to the excessive and unnatural passions of their mothers, which had reduced them to so deplorable a state. "But," said they, "if God has declared himself in our favour in so evident a manner, we ought to bear our misfortunes with patience, and to console ourselves with the hope that they will one day come to an end."

The three days passed away, and the brothers then pursued their journey. As the mountain on this side did not form one regular descent, but was broken by some considerable surface of even ground several times before they could arrive at its base, it took them five days to reach the plain. They at length discovered a large city, the sight of which exceedingly delighted them. "Do you not think, my brother," said Amgiad to Assad, "that it would be better for you to remain in some place without the town, where on my return I shall be able to find you, while I go and learn in what country we are, what is the name of the place, and what language is spoken there?" When I come back, too, I will bring some fresh provisions with me. It is therefore, I think, much the best that we do not go together, in case there should be any danger." "I highly approve of your opinion," replied Assad; "it is both prudent and wise; but, my dear brother, if one of us must separate himself from the other for this purpose, I will never suffer you to be the person; you must permit me to undertake it. What agony should I not endure, were any accident to happen to you!" "But, brother," answered Amgiad, "ought not I to fear the very same thing on your account, which you do for me? I entreat you, therefore, to suffer me to go; and do you wait patiently for me in this place." "I will never permit it," said Assad; "and if anything should happen to me, I shall at least have the consolation of knowing that you are in safety." Amgiad was at length obliged to consent, and he sat down under some trees at the foot of the mountain.

Prince Assad took some money out of the purse, of which Amgiad had the charge, and continued his journey to the town. He had not walked far in the first street he came to, before he met with a venerable-looking old man, well dressed, and with a cane in his hand. As he did not doubt but that he was a person of some consequence, and therefore one not likely to deceive him, he accosted him. "I shall be much obliged to you, sir," said Assad, "if you will inform me, which is the way to the market-place."

The old man looked at the prince with a smiling countenance, and said to

him, "My son, you seem to be a stranger; otherwise surely you would not put that question to me." "Yes, sir," replied Assad, "I am indeed a stranger." "You are welcome," added the old man; "and our country ought to esteem itself highly honoured, that a young man of such an appearance as yours takes the trouble to come and visit it. Pray inform me what business takes you to the public market-place?" "Sir," replied Assad, "it is near two months since my brother and I set out from a very distant country. We have been all this time on our journey, and arrived here only yesterday. My brother was so much fatigued with the length of the way, that he remains at the bottom of the mountain, while I am come to make inquiries, and purchase some provisions for us both."

"You could not possibly have arrived, my son," replied the old man, "more opportunely, and I heartily rejoice at it, from my regard for you and your brother. I have this very day given a great entertainment to many of my friends, and there is a great quantity of provisions left untouched by any one. Come home, therefore, with me, and I will give you abundance to eat, and when you shall have satisfied yourself, I will add as much more as will be sufficient for yourself and brother for many days. You have no occasion, therefore, to take the trouble of going and spending your money in the market; travellers, we know, have seldom too much. Besides, while you are satisfying your hunger, I will inform you of all the peculiarities and customs of our city, which I am better able to do than most people. A person like me, who has been invested with all the most honourable offices, with distinction and credit to himself, ought not to be ignorant of them. You may indeed think yourself particularly fortunate in having addressed yourself to me in preference to any other person, for I am truly sorry to say that all our inhabitants are not like myself; some of them, I assure you, are very wicked. Come then, and I will show you the difference between an honest man, as I am, and those who boast of their character without possessing any qualification to entitle them to a good one." "I am infinitely obliged to you," answered Prince Assad, "for the kindness and good intentions you express for me. I put myself entirely under your protection, and am ready to go wherever you please."

The old man continued walking on with the prince by his side, laughing in his sleeve all the time; and for fear Assad should perceive it, he conversed with him on many subjects that he might continue to have the same good opinion of him that he at first had formed. Among other things, he said, "I must confess to you that it is a fortunate circumstance that you addressed me in preference to any other person. I thank God that I have met you; you will know why I say this so earnestly when you have got to my house."

The old man at length arrived at home, and introduced Assad into a large room, where he saw forty old men sitting in a circle round a lighted fire, to which they were paying their adorations. Prince Assad felt not less horror at thus seeing human beings so far deprived of their reason as to offer that reverence to the creature in preference to the Creator, than he experienced fear at seeing himself so deceived, and in such an abominable and wicked place.

While the prince stood quite motionless in the spot where he was, the artful old man who had brought him saluted the other forty. "Fervent and devout adorers of fire," said he to them, "this is a most happy day for us. Where is Gazban?" added he; "let him come in." As these words were spoken in a loud tone of voice, a black who heard them without the room immediately made his appearance. This black, who was in fact Gazban, no sooner perceived the despairing Assad, than he understood for what purpose he was called. He ran towards him, and with a blow that he gave him, knocked him down; he then bound his arms with the most surprising quickness. He had no sooner

done this than the old man called out, "Carry him below, and do not fail to tell my daughters Bostana and Cavama to take particular care and give him enough of the bastinado every day, with only one piece of bread night and morning for him to subsist upon. This will be quite enough for his mere existence till the departure of the vessel for the blue sea and the mountain of fire; we will then offer him as a most acceptable sacrifice to our divinity."

The old man had no sooner given these cruel orders, than Gazban seized Assad in the most rough and brutal manner, and made him go down under the room, and after leading him through several doors, they came to a dungeon, into which they descended by twenty steps, and in which the black fastened him by his legs to a large and very heavy chain. As soon as he had done this, Gazban went to inform the old man's daughters: their father had, however, already spoken to them himself. "My daughters," he said to them, "go down below and bestow the bastinado in the manner you know that every Mussulman whom I make captive ought to receive it, and do not spare him. You cannot by any better means evince that you are true worshippers of fire."

Bostana and Cavama having been brought up with the greatest detestation of all Mussulmans, accepted this office with joy. They immediately went down to the dungeon, and having stripped Assad, they beat him so inhumanly, that he was covered with blood, and at last fainted. After this merciless action, they placed a piece of bread and a jar of water by his side, and left him. It was a long time before the prince returned to his senses, and he then only shed torrents of tears in deploring his miserable fate; consoling himself, however, with the idea, that this misfortune had not happened to his brother Amgiad.

In the mean time, Prince Amgiad waited for his brother at the foot of the mountain till sunset, with the greatest impatience. When he found that one, two, three, and even four hours of the night were gone, and that Assad did not make his appearance, he began to be in the greatest agitation, and even despair. He passed the night in this most distressing and anxious state, and as soon as day appeared, he set out towards the town. He was at first very much astonished at seeing so few Mussulmans. He stopped the first he met, and asked him what was the name of the place. He was informed it was called the city of the Magi, because the Magi, who were idolaters of fire, resided in great numbers in it, and that there were very few Mussulmans. He inquired also how far they reckoned it to the Isle of Ebony, when he was told for answer that by sea it was about four month's voyage, and a year's journey by land. The person to whom he had addressed himself, after having satisfied him in these particulars, abruptly left him, and continued his road, as he was in haste.

Amgiad, who had not been more than six weeks in coming from the Isle of Ebony with his brother Assad, could not comprehend how they had come so far in so short a time unless it were by enchantment, or that the road over the mountain which they had traversed was much shorter, though not at all frequented, on account of its difficulty and danger. In walking about the town, he stopped at the shop of a tailor, whom by his dress he knew to be a Mussulman, as he had also known the former person whom he had accosted. After having made his compliments to him, he sat down and informed him of the cause of the great distress he was in.

When Prince Amgiad had finished, the tailor said to him, "If your brother has fallen into the hands of any one of the Magi, you may make up your mind never to see him again. He is gone past recovery, and I advise you to console yourself, and only to endeavour to preserve yourself from the same disgraceful fate. To assist you in this, you may if you please remain with me, and I will inform you of all the cunning and artful tricks of the Magi, in order that you may be upon your guard against them when you go out." Amgiad was greatly afflicted at

the loss of his brother. He accepted the tailor's offer, and thanked him a thousand-times for the kindness he showed him.

The prince did not go out of the house for a whole month except in company with the tailor. At the end of this time he risked going alone to the bath. As he returned, he passed through a street, where he did not see a single person except a lady, whom he met, and who came up to him.

This lady, observing him to be a handsome and well-made young man, and fresh from the bath, lifted up her veil, and asked him with a smiling countenance where he was going, casting at the same time a most enticing glance on him. Amgiad was unable to resist the appearance of so many charms, and in reply said, "I am going to my own house, or to yours, whichever you like best." "Sir," answered the lady with an engaging smile, "ladies of my rank and disposition never carry men home with them: they only accompany them to their houses."

Amgiad was in the greatest embarrassment at this answer, which he did not in the least expect. He was afraid of taking the liberty to carry her to the house of his host, who would be much scandalized at it, and he should thus run the risk also of losing his protection, which was so necessary in a town where so many precautions were to be taken. The little experience, also, he had in the town, made him ignorant of any place to which he might carry her; he could not, however, resolve to let his good fortune escape him. In this uncertain state he determined to leave everything to chance; and without answering the lady a word, he went on, and she followed him.

Prince Amgiad walked on for a long time from street to street, from one crossway to another, and from square to square. They were at last both greatly fatigued with walking so much, when they came down a street, which was terminated by a large door, belonging to a house of considerable appearance, with a bench or seat on each side of it. Amgiad sat down on one to take breath, and the lady, even more tired than he, sat down on the other.

"Is this your house?" said she to Prince Amgiad, as soon as he was seated. "You see it is, madam," replied the prince. "Why do you not then open the door?" added she, "what do you wait for?" "My charming creature," answered Amgiad, "it is because I have not the key. I left it with my slave, to whom I gave some commission; and he is not yet returned from executing it. And as I ordered him after that to go and purchase some provisions for a good dinner, I am afraid that we shall have to wait a considerable time.

The difficulty in which the prince found himself in thus endeavouring to complete his adventure, began to damp his passion, and make him repent of his enterprise. He therefore made use of that evasive pretence, in hopes that the lady would take offence at it, and in her anger would leave him to go and seek her fortune in some other place, but he was mistaken. "What an impertinent slave is yours," said she, "to make you wait thus; I will chastise him myself as he deserves, if you do not punish him well when he comes back. It is not indeed quite the thing for me to remain here alone at a door with a man." Having said this, she got up, and took a large stone, in order to break the lock, which according to the custom of that country, was made of wood, and not very strong.

Amgiad knew not what to do, nor how to prevent her intention. "Madam," he cried, "what are you going to do? Do me the favour to have a little more patience." "What are you afraid of?" said she: "Is not the house your own? There is no great harm in breaking a wooden lock; and its place is easily supplied." She then broke the lock; and as soon as the door was open, she entered and walked on before. When the prince saw the house broken open, he gave himself up for lost. He hesitated whether he should go in, or

endeavour to make his escape in order to free himself from a danger which seemed to him to be almost inevitable; and he was on the point of determining on the latter plan, when the lady came back and found he was not going in. "What are you about," she said, "that you do not come into your own house?" "I am looking, madam," he answered, "to see if my slave is returning; because I am afraid we shall find nothing ready." "Come, come," added she, "we can wait much better within, than standing here in expectation of his arrival."

The prince, though much against his will, then went into a very large and handsome paved court. From this they ascended by a few steps to a grand vestibule, where both he and the lady perceived a large open room handsomely furnished, and one table set out with numerous excellent dishes, another covered with a variety of fine fruits, and a sideboard well supplied with wine. When Amgiad saw these preparations, he no longer doubted that his destruction was near at hand. "It is all over with you, poor Amgiad," said he to himself: "you will not long survive your dear brother Assad." The lady, on the contrary, was delighted with this agreeable sight. "What, sir!" she cried, "you were fearful that nothing was ready, and you may now perceive that your slave has even exceeded his orders, and done more than you thought! But if I do not deceive myself, these preparations are for some other lady, and not intended for me. Well, never mind, let her come: I promise you not to be jealous at it. The only favour that I ask of you is, that you will suffer me to wait upon you both."

Amgiad could not help laughing at the pleasantry of the lady, notwithstanding the melancholy and painful sensations he felt. "Madam," said he, totally absorbed in the afflicting reflections that preyed upon his mind, "I assure you that you are much mistaken in your conjectures. This is only my common fare." As he could not resolve to sit down at a table that had not been prepared for him, he was going to a sofa, but the lady prevented him. "What are you about?" she cried; "after having gone into the bath, you ought to be almost famished with hunger. Come, let us sit down at the table, and eat and enjoy ourselves."

The prince was obliged to do as the lady liked. They therefore sat down and began to eat. After the first mouthful or two, she took a bottle and glass and poured out some wine. She drank the first glass to the health of Amgiad. Having done this, she filled the same glass again, and presented it to the prince, who did the same.

The more he reflected upon the adventure, the more astonished was he at finding not only that the master of the house did not make his appearance, but that not a single domestic was to be discovered, although the house itself was so handsome, and so richly furnished. "My happiness and good fortune will be extraordinary indeed," said he to himself, "if the master should not make his appearance at all, and I should safely get out of this intrigue." While these thoughts continued to be uppermost in his mind as well as others of a more distressing nature, the lady continued to eat and drink from time to time, obliging him also to do the same. They were already come to the fruit, when the master of the house arrived.

It was, in fact, the master of the horse to the king of the Magi, and whose name was Bahadar. This house belonged to him, but he had another, in which he commonly lived. He only made use of this to receive three or four chosen friends in, and for this purpose everything was brought from his other; and this was exactly what had been done that day by some of his people, who had left it only a few moments before Amgiad and the lady came there.

Bahadar himself arrived without any attendants, and in disguise, as was his

usual custom, and he came rather before the time on which he had appointed to meet his friends. He was not a little surprised at finding the door of his house forced open. He went in, therefore, without making any noise; and as he heard some people talking and enjoying themselves in the eating-room, he crept round by the wall, and put his head half into the room to see who they were. And as he observed only a young man and a female, who were eating at the table which was prepared for himself and his friends, and that the mischief they had done was not so great as he expected, he resolved to divert himself with them.

The lady, who had her back turned towards the door, did not perceive Bahadar; but Amgiad saw him the very first instant, while he was in the act of drinking. At sight of him he instantly changed colour, and fixed his eyes upon Bahadar, who made him a sign not to say a word, but to come and speak to him. Amgiad drank his glass and got up. "Where are you going?" inquired the lady. "Remain here a moment, I beg of you, madam," replied he, "I will be back instantly: a trifling business obliges me to go out." The prince found Bahadar waiting for him in the vestibule; and they both went down into the court, that the lady might not hear their conversation.

When they were got into the court, Bahadar asked the prince by what means he came with the lady to his house; and why he had forced the door? "Sir," replied Amgiad, "I must in your eyes appear very much to blame: but if you will have the patience to hear my story, I hope you will be convinced of my innocence." He then went on and related to Bahadar in a few words everything as it exactly was, without disguising a single circumstance: and to prove to him that he was unable to commit so disgraceful an action as that of breaking open a house, he did not even conceal from him that he was a prince, or his motives for coming to the city of the Magi.

Bahadar, who was passionately fond of foreigners, was highly delighted at having an opportunity of obliging one of so high a rank and illustrious a quality as Amgiad. In fact, his air, his manners, his chosen and correct conversation, left no doubt of the perfect truth of his account. "Prince," said he, "I am excessively happy at thus finding an occasion of obliging you, from so accidental, singular, and pleasant a meeting as the present. So far from disturbing your festivity, I shall take a great pleasure in contributing all in my power to your satisfaction. Before I inform you any further on this subject, I must tell you that I am master of the horse to the king, and that my name is Bahadar. I have another house, in which I commonly live, and this is the place where I sometimes come to enjoy myself, without any ceremony, with my friends. You have made your lady believe that you have a slave, though in fact you have none. I will be that slave; and that I may not distress you by this proposal, nor you wish to excuse yourself from having it so, I repeat again to you, that I particularly wish it, and you shall hereafter know my motives for this conduct.

"Go, then, and again take your place, and continue to divert yourself; and when, after some time, I shall return and shall present myself before you, dressed like a slave, quarrel well with me, and do not be afraid even of striking me. I will attend upon you all the time you are at table, and even till night. You shall both sleep here; and to-morrow morning you shall send the lady back in the most honourable manner. After this, I will endeavour to render you some services of greater consequence. Go, then, and lose no time." Amgiad wished to make some reply, but Bahadar would not suffer it, and compelled him to go back directly to the lady.

Amgiad had scarcely returned to the room where he had left the lady, than the friends whom Bahadar had invited arrived. He requested them as a favour

to excuse him entertaining them at that time; giving them to understand that they would approve of his conduct when they should know the cause and which they should be informed of the first opportunity. They were no sooner gone than he went out and procured the habit of a slave, in which he dressed himself.

The prince rejoined the lady, highly delighted at having thus fortunately stumbled, as it were, upon a house belonging to a person of so much consequence, and one who treated him in this unpleasant situation so kindly. "Madam," said he, as he again sat down to the table, "I beg you a thousand pardons for my incivility, and the bad humour in which I felt myself on account of my slave's absence. The rascal shall pay for it well; I will let him see that he shall not be absent so long a time with impunity." "Do not let this disturb you," replied the lady; "it will only be so much the worse for him. If he commits any faults, he will suffer for it. Trouble yourself no more about him, but let us only think of enjoying ourselves."

They continued at table with much more pleasure and delight than before, because Amgiad was no longer uneasy at any consequence that might have arisen from the indiscretion of the lady, who ought not to have forced the door, although it had even belonged to Amgiad. He did not now feel himself in worse humour than the lady herself; and while they continued to drink more than they ate, they amused themselves with saying a thousand pleasant and humorous things till the arrival of Bahadar in his disguise.

He came in like a slave who was much mortified at finding his master with company before he returned. He immediately threw himself at his feet, and kissing the ground, begged his pardon for being so late. And when he got up he stood still, with his hands crossed, and his eyes cast down, waiting for what he was commanded to do. "Impudent fellow," cried Amgiad, in a tone and manner of voice as if he were in a great passion, "tell me if there is in the whole world a worse slave than yourself? Where have you been? What have you been about not to come back till this time of day?" "My lord," replied Bahadar, "I entreat your pardon; I am now come from executing the orders you gave me; and I did not think you would return so early." "You are a rascal," said the prince, "and I will give you a good beating, to teach you not tell falsehoods and be so negligent of your duty." He then got up, took a stick, and gave him three or four slight blows, after which he returned to the table.

The lady, however, was not satisfied with this trifling punishment. She got up in her turn, and taking the stick, she beat Bahadar so unmercifully, that the tears came into his eyes. Amgiad was excessively hurt at the liberty which she allowed herself; and the manner in which she had treated one of the first officers of the king. He kept calling out that she had beaten him quite enough, but she nevertheless went on striking him. "Let me alone," she cried, "I wish to satisfy myself, and teach him not to be absent so long another time." She continued to beat him with so much violence, that Amgiad was forced to get up and take the stick out of her hands, which he had some difficulty in doing. When she found she could no longer beat him, she sat down in her place, and kept saying a thousand abusive things to him.

Bahadar dried his tears, and remained standing behind them to pour out their wine. As soon as he saw that they had finished both eating and drinking, he took away all the things, cleaned out the room, put everything in its proper place; and when night came on, he lighted up the candles. Every time that he went out, or came in, the lady did not fail to scold at, threaten, and abuse him; all of which was done to the great discontent of Amgiad, who would willingly have prevented her, but was afraid of saying a word. When

it was the proper time to retire to rest, Bahadar prepared a bed for them upon the sofa, and then went to another apartment, where he in a very short time fell asleep, through the great fatigue he had undergone.

Amgiad and the lady continued in conversation for at least half an hour longer; and before they retired to rest, the latter having occasion to pass through the vestibule, heard Bahadar, who was already fast asleep, snore very loud. As she had observed that there was a scimitar hanging up in the room where they had been feasting, she went back and said to Amgiad, "I beg of you to do one thing for love of me." "What can I do to serve you?" replied the prince. "Oblige me by taking this scimitar," added she, "and go and cut off the head of your slave."

This proposal excited the greatest astonishment in the prince; and he had no doubt but that the quantity of wine she had drunk was the cause of it. "Madam," he replied, "let us not regard my slave; he is not worthy of our thoughts; I have punished him, and so have you also: let this be sufficient. Besides, I am very well satisfied with him upon the whole, as he is not in general accustomed to be guilty of these faults." "That is of no consequence to me," replied the enraged female. "I wish the rascal dead, and if he is not to be killed by your hands, he shall be by mine." Having said this, she took up the scimitar, drew it from the scabbard, and ran out, to put her diabolical design in execution.

Amgiad followed and overtook her in the vestibule. "You must be satisfied, madam," he cried, "since you insist upon it. I am, however, determined, that no one but myself shall kill my slave." As soon as she had given him the scimitar, he said, "Follow me, and do not make any noise for fear of waking him." They went into the chamber where Bahadar was; but instead of aiming the blow at him, Amgiad directed it at the lady, whose head fell upon Bahadar. If the noise made by the action of cutting off the lady's head would not have disturbed his sleep, the head itself gave him a sufficient blow to rouse him. Astonished at seeing Amgiad standing by him with the bloody scimitar in his hand, and the headless body of the female upon the ground, Bahadar eagerly inquired the meaning of all this. The prince related everything to him exactly as it had passed, and in conclusion, he added, "To prevent this enraged creature from taking your life, I could discover no other sure method than destroying her own."

"Sir," replied Bahadar, impressed with the greatest gratitude, "persons of your rank and generous character are not capable of giving aid to any actions of so wicked a nature. You are my preserver, and I cannot sufficiently thank you." So great was his sense of the obligation, that he instantly embraced him. "Before the day breaks," said he, "this body must be carried out. I will undertake to do this." Amgiad, however, opposed it, and said that he would take that charge upon himself, as he had been the cause of her death. "A stranger in this place, like you, will not be so well able to manage it," replied Bahadar. "Leave it to me, and do you retire to rest. If I do not return before daybreak, you may be assured that the watch has surprised me. For fear this should happen, I will now make over to you, in writing, this house, and all it contains, and you may live here at your ease."

As soon as Bahadar had written what was sufficient to transfer the house to Amgiad, and had put this deed of gift into his hands, he took the lady's body and head, and inclosed them in a sack. He then threw it across his shoulders, and walked along, from street to street, towards the sea. He had not, however, proceeded very far before he encountered the officer of the police, who was going his rounds in person. His attendants stopped Bahadar, and opening the sack, discovered the body and head of the murdered lady. The

magistrate, who knew the master of the horse notwithstanding his disguise, carried him home with him, as he durst not put a person of his high rank and dignity to death without acquainting the king with it. The next morning, therefore, he took Bahadar into the royal presence. The king had no sooner been informed, from the report of the officer, of this cruel action, which as appeared from all the circumstances Bahadar had been guilty of, than he loaded him with abuse. "Is this the way," he cried, "that you murder my subjects, in order to plunder them, and then throw their bodies into the sea, to prevent the discovery of your tyranny? Let them be freed from such a monster, and hang him."

Notwithstanding the conscious innocence of Bahadar, he received the sentence of death with perfect resignation, and said not a word in his own justification. The judge reconducted him to prison, and while the gibbet was preparing, he sent criers to publish in all the quarters of the city the justice which was going to be executed, at noon, on the grand master of the horse, for having committed murder.

Prince Amgiad, who ineffectually waited for Bahadar, was in inexpressible consternation, when he heard the crier proclaiming this sentence from the house in which he was. "If any one is to die for the death of so wicked a woman," said he to himself, "it is not Bahadar who should suffer, but myself; and I cannot bear that the innocent should be punished for the guilty." Without further deliberation, he went immediately to the spot where the execution was to take place, and mingled with the crowd, which was collecting from all parts.

As soon as Amgiad saw the judge make his appearance, leading Bahadar to the gibbet, he went and presented himself before him. "My lord," said he, "I come to declare to you, and assure you, that the master of the horse, whom you are going to lead to execution, is quite innocent of the death of the lady, for which he is to suffer. It was I who committed this crime, if a crime indeed it can be called, to deprive a detestable woman of life, who was on the point of murdering the master of the horse; the thing happened thus."

When Prince Amgiad had informed the judge of the manner in which the lady had accosted him on his coming out of the bath, of her being the cause of his breaking into the house of Bahadar, and of all that had passed, until he found himself obliged to cut off her head to save the life of Bahadar, the judge suspended the execution and took them both before the king.

The monarch desired to be informed of the whole affair by Amgiad himself, and in order to exculpate himself, as well as the master of the horse the better, he took advantage of the opportunity to relate the whole of his history, together with that of Prince Assad, his brother, from the beginning up to the present time.

When the prince had concluded his narrative, the king said to him, "I am very much pleased, prince, that this affair has afforded me the opportunity of becoming acquainted with you: I not only grant you your life and pardon, together with that of the master of the horse, whose good intention towards you I commend and admire, and whom I re-establish in his office; but I also confer on you the dignity of grand vizier, to console you for the unjust, although excusable, treatment you have experienced from the king, your father. As for Prince Assad, I give you free permission to exercise all the authority you are invested with to discover where he is."

After Amgiad had thanked the king of the city of the Magi, and entered into his office of grand vizier, he made use of every method he could devise to find the prince, his brother. He proclaimed, by means of the public criers, in all quarters of the city, the promise of a considerable reward to any one who

should bring Assad to him, or even give him information where he might be found. He employed people to make inquiries in all parts, but notwithstanding all his researches, he could obtain no intelligence of him.

Assad, in the meantime, was constantly chained down in the dungeon, where he had been confined through the artifice of the old man ; and Bostana and Cavama his daughters, continued to treat him in the same cruel and inhuman manner. The solemn festival of the idolaters of fire drew near ; the vessel, which usually sailed to the mountain of fire, was equipped for that purpose, and a captain, named Behram, who was a zealous promoter of the religion of the Magi, undertook to lade it with merchandise. When it was ready to put to sea, Behram contrived for Assad to be placed in a case half full of merchandise, leaving sufficient space between the planks to admit air for him to breathe ; and then had the case let down into the hold of the ship.

Before the vessel set sail, the grand vizier Amgiad, who had been informed that the worshippers of fire made it an annual custom to sacrifice a Mussulman on the fiery mountain, and that Assad, who had probably fallen into their hands, might be the destined victim of this bloody ceremony, wished to inspect the vessel. He went in person, and ordered all the seamen and passengers to come on deck, while his people searched the vessel ; but Assad was too well concealed to be discovered.

The search being concluded, the ship left the harbour, and when it was in the open sea, Behram took Assad out of his case, but kept him confined by a chain ; fearing, that as he was not ignorant of the fate to which he was destined, he might in despair throw himself headlong into the sea.

After some days' sail, the wind, which had hitherto been favourable, became suddenly contrary, and increased to such a violent degree, that it at length terminated in a furious tempest. The vessel not only lost its track, but Behram and the pilot did not know where they were, and were fearful every moment of dashing on a rock, and going to pieces. During the height of the storm, they discovered land, and Behram knew it to be the situation of the harbour and capital of Queen Margiana, which occasioned him great vexation and sorrow.

The fact was, that Queen Margiana, who was a Mussulman, professed a mortal enmity to the idolaters of fire. She not only did not tolerate one in her dominions, but she would not even suffer any of their vessels to come into her port.

It was, however, totally out of the power of Behram to avoid making for the harbour of this city, unless he had exposed himself to the danger of being cast away on the dangerous rocks which lined the shore. In this extremity he held a council with his pilot and seamen : "My lads," said he, "you see the necessity we are reduced to. Of two things we must choose one : we must either be swallowed up by the waves, or take refuge with Queen Margiana ; but you well know her implacable hatred to our religion, and to all who profess it. She will not fail to seize our ship, and condemn us all to death, without mercy. I see but one remedy, which may perhaps succeed. I propose that we take off the chains from the Mussulman who is with us, and dress him as a slave. When Queen Margiana sends for me to appear before her, and asks me what I trade in, I will tell her that I am a merchant who sells slaves, that I have sold all I had, with the exception of one only, whom I have reserved for myself, as a sort of secretary, because he can read and write. She will desire to see him ; and as he is well-looking ; and moreover is of her religion, she will be moved with compassion for him, and will no doubt propose to purchase him of me, on condition, however, that we shall remain in her harbour until the weather is fair. If you can mention a better plan, speak, and I will hear you." The pilot and seamen applauded it very much, and it was put in practice.

Behram ordered Prince Assad's chains to be taken off, and had him neatly

dressed as a slave, who was in the office of writer, or secretary to his ship, in which character he wished him to appear before the queen. Assad was scarcely dressed and prepared for his part when the vessel entered the harbour and cast anchor. As soon as Queen Margiana, whose palace was situated near the sea, so that the garden extended along the shore, had perceived the ship at anchor in the port, she sent to the captain to come to her; and that she might the sooner gratify her curiosity, she went to meet him in the garden.

Behram, who expected this summons, went on shore with Prince Assad, having first exacted a promise from him of confirming what he should say of his being a slave, and secretary to the ship, they were conducted before the queen, and Behram, throwing himself at her feet, described to her the necessity he had been under of taking refuge in her harbour; he then told her that he was a merchant dealing in slaves, and that Assad, whom he had brought with him, was the only one remaining, but that he kept him for himself in the capacity of secretary.

Margiana had felt a predilection for Assad from the first moment she cast her eyes on him, and she was delighted to hear that he was a slave. Determined, therefore, to purchase him at whatever price, she asked Assad his name. "Great Queen," replied he, with tears in his eyes, "does your majesty wish to know the name I formerly bore, or that by which I am now called?"

"What, have you two names?" inquired the queen. "Alas!" resumed the prince, "I have indeed. I was formerly called Assad, or the most happy, but my name now is Motar, or one destined for sacrifice."

Margiana, who could not understand the true meaning of this reply, supposed he applied it to his present state of slavery, and at the same time discovered he had a ready wit. "As you are a secretary," said she afterwards, "I conclude you can write very well; let me see some of your writing." Assad, who was provided with an ink-horn, which was fastened to his girdle, and some paper—for Behram had not forgotten these circumstances, the better to persuade the queen that he was in reality what she believed him to be—withdrew to a little distance, and wrote the following sentences, which bore some relation to his miserable condition:—

"The blind man avoids the ditch into which the clearsighted stumbles. The ignorant man elevates himself to the highest dignities by speeches which signify nothing, while the wise man remains neglected as the dust, though possessed of the greatest eloquence. The Mussulman is in the deepest misery, notwithstanding his riches, but the infidel triumphs in the midst of his prosperity. We must not hope that things will change; the Almighty decrees that they should remain in their present state."

Assad presented the paper to Queen Margiana, who did not bestow less commendation on the morality of the sentences than on the beauty of the writing; in short, nothing more was requisite to inflame her heart, and make her feel unfeigned compassion for the unfortunate youth. She had no sooner finished reading it than she addressed herself to Behram; "Choose which you will do," said she: "either sell me this slave, or give him to me; perhaps you may find it most to your advantage to do the latter." Behram replied in a very insolent manner, that he had no choice to make, for that he wanted his slave, and should therefore keep him.

Margiana, irritated by this behaviour, said no more to Behram, but taking Assad by the arm, made him walk before her, till they reached the palace, when she sent to acquaint Behram that she should confiscate all his property, and set fire to his vessel in the middle of the harbour, if he attempted to pass the night there. He was obliged to return to his vessel, truly mortified, and

to prepare with the utmost diligence for sailing, although the tempest had not entirely subsided.

The queen having, on her return to the palace, ordered supper to be instantly served, conducted Prince Assad to her apartment, where she made him sit next her. Assad wished to decline it, saying that so great an honour was not to be conferred on a slave. "On a slave!" exclaimed the queen, "a moment since and you were one, but you are no longer a slave. Sit down next me, I tell you, and relate your history to me, for I am certain, by what you wrote just now, as well as by the insolence of that merchant, that it must be very extraordinary."

Prince Assad obeyed; and when he had finished his relation at length, Margiana, more than ever irritated against the idolaters of fire, said to him, "Prince, notwithstanding the aversion I have always felt against the worshippers of fire, I have nevertheless conducted myself with great humanity towards them; but after the barbarous treatment you have experienced from them, and their execrable design of sacrificing you as a victim to the object of their idolatry, I henceforth declare implacable war against them." She would have indulged her invectives still further on this subject, had not supper been served, and she sat down to table with Prince Assad, charmed with his presence, and delighted to hear him, being already prejudiced in his favour by a rising flame, which she purposed to take an early opportunity of disclosing to him. "Prince," said she, "you must now make up for all the fasting and bad meals which the pitiless worshippers of fire obliged you to endure. You want nourishment after so many sufferings;" saying these and other words of the same nature, she helped him repeatedly both to eat and drink; the repast lasted a considerable time, and Assad drank some glasses more than he could well bear.

When the table was cleared, Assad wished to breathe the fresh air, and took the opportunity of going out when the queen did not perceive him. He went down into the court, and seeing the gate of the garden open, he entered it. Attracted by the various beauties of the spot, he walked about for some time. He at length went towards a fountain, which formed one of the principal ornaments of the garden, and washed his hands and face in it to refresh himself; then sitting down to rest himself on the lawn which bordered it, he insensibly fell asleep.

Night was approaching, and Behram, who did not wish to afford Margiana an opportunity of executing her menaces, had already weighed anchor, not a little vexed at having lost Assad, and being thus frustrated in his hope of sacrificing his victim. He endeavoured, however, to console himself with the reflection that the storm had ceased, and that a land-breeze favoured his departure. As soon as he had got out of the harbour, with the assistance of his boat, before he drew it up into the ship, "My lads," said he to the sailors, who were in it, "stay a little, and don't come up yet; I am going to give you the casks to fetch water, and I will wait for you just off the shore." The sailors, who did not know where they should be able to procure any, excused themselves from going; but Behram, while he was speaking with the queen in the garden, had remarked the fountain: "Go ashore at the garden at the palace," said he; "get over the wall, which is not breast high, and you will find plenty of water in the basin that is in the middle of the garden."

The sailors went on shore in the place described to them by Behram, and each having taken a cask on his shoulders, they easily got over the wall. As they approached the basin they perceived a man lying asleep on the bank; and when they drew nearer they discovered him to be Assad. They divided into two parties, and whilst one set was filling the casks as quietly and with the

greatest despatch possible, the other had surrounded Assad, and watched to secure him, in case he should wake. He did not, however, disturb them, and when the casks were filled, and hoisted on the shoulders of those who were to carry them, the others seized him and took him away before he had time to recollect himself; they conveyed him over the wall, put him in the boat along with their casks, and rowed with all their strength to the ship. When they had nearly reached it, they cried out with repeated bursts of joy, "Captain, order your hautboys and your drums; we bring you back your slave."

Behram, who could not conceive how his seamen had been able to find and retake Assad, and who could not discern him in the boat, owing to the darkness of the night, waited with impatience for their coming on board to inquire what they meant; but when he saw the prince before him, he could not contain himself for joy; and without staying to be informed how they had managed to succeed in so valuable a capture, he put on his irons again, and ordering his boat to be hauled up as quickly as possible, he bent his course full sail towards the mountain of fire.

Margiana, in the meantime, was in the greatest alarm; she did not feel uneasy at first, when she perceived the absence of Prince Assad, and she did not doubt he would soon return: she waited patiently for him, but finding that after a considerable time had elapsed he did not make his appearance, she began to be very uneasy. She commanded her women to search for him, which they did, but to no purpose, and they could bring her no intelligence of him. Night came on, and she had him sought for with lights, but still as ineffectually.

In the state of impatience and alarm which Margiana experienced, she herself went to look for the prince by the light of flatabeaux, and as she observed that the garden gate was open, she went in with her women, supposing he might be there. Passing near the fountain, she observed a slipper on the bank, which, when examined, she, as well as her women, knew to be one of those worn by the prince. This circumstance, added to the quantity of water spilt on the edge of the basin, led her to conclude that Behram might have taken him away by force. She immediately sent to inquire if his ship was still in the harbour; and as she was informed that he had sailed just before the night came on, that he had stopped for some time off the shore, and that his boat had been to fetch water from her garden, she instantly despatched a messenger to the commander of ten ships of war, which were always kept in port fully equipped and ready to sail on the shortest notice, to acquaint him that she intended to embark the following day, about an hour after sunrise.

The commander was diligent in obeying her orders; she assembled the captains and other officers, the sailors and soldiers; and everything was ready by the appointed hour. She embarked, and when her squadron got out to sea, and was in full sail, she declared her intention to the commander. "You must use all expedition," said she, "and pursue the merchant-vessel which sailed from the harbour yesterday evening. I give it up as your prize if you take it; but if you do not succeed, your life shall be the forfeit."

The ten ships chased Behram's vessel for two whole days, without being able to get within sight of it. On the third, they discovered it at break of day; and by noon they had surrounded it, so that it could not escape. The cruel Behram had no sooner perceived the ten vessels, than he concluded it must be the squadron of Queen Margiana in person of him, and he immediately inflicted the bastinado on Prince Assad; for he had continued that practice daily from the time he had left the city of the Magi, and he now repeated his chastisement with more violence than usual. He was extremely embarrassed when he found he was on the point of being surrounded on all sides. If he kept Assad, he

proved himself culpable. If he deprived him of life, he was fearful that some mark might remain to discover his guilt. He had him unchained, and the prince was then made to go up from the hold of the ship where he was confined, and appear before him. "It is thou," said he, "who art the cause of our being pursued;" and on saying this, he threw him into the sea.

Prince Assad could swim very well, and made use of his hands and feet with so much success, that, assisted by the waves, which bore him towards the shore, he had sufficient strength to hold out till he reached land. When he was in safety, the first thing he did was to return thanks to God for having delivered him from so great a peril, and again favoured his escape from the hands of the idolaters of fire. He then undressed himself, and having wrung the water from his clothes, he spread them on a rock to dry. This was soon effected, as well from the heat of the sun, as from that of the rock, which had received considerable warmth from the power of its rays.

He lay down for some time deploring his miserable fate, ignorant of the country in which he was, and uncertain which way to go. He then took up his clothes, put them on, and without leaving the coast, he began to proceed, and continued walking till he came to a road, which he followed. He pursued this path or road for ten days through a country that seemed to be without inhabitants, and in which he found nothing but wild fruits and a few plants along the banks of the rivulets, on which he lived. He at last arrived at a town, which he immediately knew to be the city of the Magi, where he had been so ill used, and where his brother Amnrad was grand vizier. At this he was much rejoiced, but was determined to address himself to no one whom he knew to be a worshipper of fire, but only to speak to Mussulmans; for he remembered to have remarked a few of the latter as he came into the city the first time. As it was late, and he knew very well that all the shops were shut up, and that few people were abroad at that hour, he resolved to go into a burial-place, which was close to the town, and pass the night there, as there were many tombs in it that were built like mausoleums. In looking about he discovered one, of which the door was open. He went in, and determined to remain there.

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Margiana immediately went on board the vessel, and asked Behram where the secretary was whom he had the audacity either to take away, or to make others carry him, from her palace. "Queen," replied Behram, "I swear to your majesty that he is not on board my vessel; if you will order it to be searched, you will then know my innocence."

Margiana commanded the vessel to be searched with the greatest possible strictness; but he whom she was so desirous of finding, as much for the love she had for him as from her natural goodness of disposition, could not be found. She was even on the point of killing Behram with her own hand; but she restrained herself, and was satisfied with confiscating the vessel and all its cargo, and putting him and all his sailors afloat in their open boat, with the chance of reaching the shore. Having landed, Behram and his crew went on, and happened to arrive at the city of the Magi on the very same night in which Assad had taken refuge in the burial-ground, and retired to the tomb. As the gate of the city was shut, he was also obliged to have recourse to the cemetery, and to find some tomb to wait in till day appeared, and the gate was again open.

Unfortunately for Assad, Behram came to that in which he was. He went

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The next morning, as soon as the gate of the city was open, it was very easy for Behram to carry Assad back to the old man's house, who had so completely deceived him by his cunning tricks; and by taking him through unfrequented streets, as few people had yet risen, he was sure of not being discovered. As soon as he arrived there, he took him into the same dungeon from whence he had before been brought, and then went and informed the old man of the unfortunate cause of his return, and the bad success of his voyage. The wicked wretch did not forget to impress his two daughters very strongly with the necessity of ill-treating the unfortunate prince in a still worse manner, if possible, than before.

Assad was extremely surprised at finding himself again in the same place, where he had already suffered so much, and in expectation of the same tortures, from which he thought himself delivered for ever. He wept, and was lamenting the hardness of his destiny, when he saw Bostana enter his dungeon with a stick in her hand, and a pitcher of water. He trembled at the sight of this merciless creature, and groaned aloud when he reflected upon the daily torments he was again to endure for another whole year, before he was to be led to his most horrible kind of death.

Bostana, however, did not treat the unfortunate Assad in so cruel a manner as she had done when he was in his prison the former time. The lamentations, the complaints, and the continual prayers of the prince to spare him, joined to his tears, were at length so powerful, that Bostana could not avoid being softened by them, and even to mingle her tears with his. "Sister," she said to Assad, as she again covered his shoulders, "I ask you a thousand pardons for the cruelty with which I have before treated you, and of which I have again made you feel the ill effects. Hitherto I have been afraid of disobeying my father, who is so unjustly enraged against you, and who is determined upon your destruction. But I now detest and abhor his barbarity. Console yourself, therefore, for your evils are at an end; and I am going to repair all my crimes, the enormity of which I am well aware of, by better treatment. You have hitherto looked upon me as an infidel; you must for the future regard me as a Mussulman. I have already received much instruction from a female slave who attends me; I hope that you will complete what she has begun. To prove to you my good intentions, I ask pardon of the true God for all my offences against, and ill-treatment of, you; and I have full confidence that he will discover to me the means of restoring you to your full liberty."

This speech afforded Prince Assad great consolation; he offered up his grateful thanks to God for instilling such kindness into the heart of Bostana, and converting her to the true religion. After first thanking her for the good opinion she had expressed for him, he neglected nothing that he thought would confirm her in her new opinions, not only by endeavouring to instruct her still further in the various doctrines of the Mussulman religion, but even giving her a long and faithful account of himself, of all his misfortunes, and his illustrious descent; and as soon as he was convinced of her firmness in the good resolutions she had taken, he asked her how she would be able to prevent her sister Cavama from

becoming acquainted with this change, and also from using him so ill, when it should be her turn. "Let not that give you any pain," replied Bostana; "I know very well how to manage, so that she shall give herself no further trouble about you."

In fact, Bostana found some means of preventing Cavama, every time she expressed a wish to go into the dungeon. She herself, however, saw the prince very often; and instead of carrying only bread and water to him, as she was ordered, she brought him wine and a variety of excellent food, which was prepared by twelve Mussulman slaves, who attended on her. She frequently also partook of his repasts with him, and did everything in her power to console him.

Some days after Prince Assad's return to the city of the Magi, Bostana happened to be at the door of her house, when she heard the public crier giving notice of something. As she could not understand what the crier said, because he was so far off, and as she observed him coming up towards the house, she went in, but left the door a little open, and listened. She saw him walking on before the grand vizier, Amgiad, Prince Assad's brother, accompanied by several officers of state, and with a great multitude of people following them.

The crier had not gone many steps from the door, before he made the following proclamation, in a loud tone of voice:—"The most excellent and illustrious grand vizier, who is now present, comes in person to inquire after, and seek for, his brother, who has been separated from him for more than a year. His person and description are as follows. If any person has given him a lodging at his house, or knows where he is, his Excellency commands them to bring him to him, or to give him some information concerning him, and he promises to reward them handsomely. But if any one shall conceal and detain him, and he shall afterwards be discovered, his Excellency declares that he will punish such persons with death, together with their wives, their children, and all their family, and will also raze their houses to the ground."

Bostana no sooner heard these words, than she instantly shut the door, and went to the dungeon where Assad was. "Prince," cried she in a joyful manner, "your misfortunes are at length terminated; follow me as quickly as possible." Assad, whom she had released from his chains on the very first day that he had been brought back to the dungeon, followed her into the street, and when there, she instantly cried out, "Behold him, behold him." The grand vizier, who had not proceeded far, turned round. Assad instantly recognised his brother, ran towards him, and fell into his arms. Amgiad, too, knew him from the first moment, and embraced him. He then made him mount the horse of one of his officers, who returned on foot, and conducted him in triumph to the palace, where he presented him to the king, who appointed him one of his viziers.

Bostana, who after this event did not wish to return to her father's, whose house was razed to the ground the very same day, and did not leave Prince Assad till he arrived at the palace, was sent to an apartment belonging to the queen. The old man her father, and Behram, as well as all their families, being brought the next day before the king, he ordered them all to lose their heads. On this, they threw themselves at his feet, and implored his mercy. "You shall have no mercy shown you," replied the king, "unless you renounce the adoration of fire, and embrace the Mussulman religion." By adopting this conduct they saved their lives; and so also did Cavama, the sister of Bostana, and all their families.

In consideration of Behram's being converted to a Mussulman, and in order to give him some recompense for the loss he had before suffered, Amgiad made him one of his principal officers, and lodged him at his own house. A few days after, when Behram was made acquainted with the adventures of his benefactor

Amgiad and his brother Assad, he proposed to fit out a vessel, and to carry them back to their father Camaralzaman. "There is no doubt," he said, "but that the king is by this time convinced of your innocence, and is impatient to see you again. Should, however, that not be the case, it is very easy to be informed of it before you land, and then should he still continue in his unjust prepossession, you will find no difficulty in returning."

The two brothers accepted Behram's offer. They mentioned their design to the king, who not only approved of it, but gave orders for the immediate equipment of a vessel. Behram hastened the preparations as much as possible; and when he was ready to set sail, the princes went and took leave of the king on the morning before they embarked. While they were paying their compliments, and thanking the monarch for all his kindness to them, they heard a great bustle and tumult through the whole city; and at the same moment an officer came and said, that a very large army was approaching, and that no one could tell to whom it belonged.

Observing the alarm that this bad news gave the king, Amgiad said to him, "Although, sire, I am now come for the purpose of resigning the office of grand vizier, with which you have honoured me, I am, notwithstanding, ready to take upon myself the charge of rendering you any service in my power; and I entreat you to suffer me to go and see who this enemy is, that comes thus to attack you in your very capital, without having first declared war." The king begged he would, and he instantly set out with very few attendants.

It was not long before Prince Amgiad discovered the army, which appeared so formidable, and continued to approach. The advanced guards, who had received their orders, gave him a favourable reception, and conducted him before a princess, who stopped with her whole army to hold a conference with him. Prince Amgiad made her a most profound reverence, and asked her if she came as a friend or an enemy; and if she was an enemy, he requested to be informed what cause of complaint she had against the king his master. "I come as a friend," she replied, "and have no cause whatever for complaint against the king of the Magi. His dominions and mine are situated in such a manner, that it is almost impossible that we can ever have any dispute together. I come only to require a slave, whose name is Assad, and who has been taken away from me by a captain belonging to this city, who is called Behram, and is the most insolent of men. And I trust your king will afford me justice when he shall know that my name is Margiana."

"Powerful queen," replied Amgiad, "I am the brother of that slave whom you seem to search after with so much interest and concern. I had lost him, and have now recovered him. Come with me, and I will give him up to you, and will likewise have the honour to inform you of every other particular. The king my master will be delighted to see you."

Queen Margiana then ordered her army to encamp in the spot where it then was, and accompanied Prince Amgiad through the city to the palace, where he presented her to the king. When the monarch had received her in the way she deserved, Prince Assad, who was present, and who knew her the moment she appeared, came and paid his compliments to her. She expressed great joy at seeing him again; when, at this very instant some one entered, and announced to the king that another army, much more powerful than the first, had made its appearance on the other side of the city. The king of the Magi seemed more alarmed now than he was when that belonging to Margiana came in sight, as the present appeared much the most numerous, if he might judge from the clouds of dust which its approach occasioned, and which seemed to spread itself through the whole air. "What will become of us, Amgiad?" he cried; "there is a fresh army approaching to overwhelm us." The prince knew what

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the king meant ; he therefore mounted his horse, and rode as fast as possible to meet this second army. He demanded of the first part of it which he encountered, to speak to their commander, and they conducted him before a king, as he instantly conjectured, from a crown which he had upon his head. As soon as he perceived him, although at some distance, he alighted, and when he was come nearer, he prostrated himself on the ground, and asked what he wished of the king his master.

"I am called Gaiour," replied the monarch, "and am king of China. The desire of learning some intelligence of a daughter, named Badoura, whom many years since I gave in marriage to Prince Camaralzaman, son of Schahzaman, king of the Islands of the Children of Khaledan, has been the cause of my leaving my dominions. I gave this prince leave to go and see his father, with the charge of coming to spend every other year with me, and bringing my daughter with him. I have, however, for a great length of time been unable to hear anything of them. Your king, therefore, will much oblige an afflicted father, if he can give him the least information on the subject."

Prince Amgiad, who instantly knew by this speech that it was his grandfather, kissed his hand with great tenderness, and said to him, "Your majesty will pardon this liberty, when you shall know that I behave thus in order to pay my respects to you as my grandfather. I am the son of Camaralzaman, at this time king of the Island of Ebony, and of Queen Badoura, on whose account you are so much distressed ; and I do not doubt but that they are at this time in their dominions in perfect health." The king of China instantly embraced him in the most affectionate manner, so much was he delighted at thus seeing his grandson. And this very unexpected and happy meeting drew tears from the eyes of both. On asking what was the reason of his being thus in a foreign country, Prince Amgiad related his history, and that of his brother Assad. When it was finished, "My son," replied the king of China, "it is not just that two princes, so innocent as you are, should experience any further bad effects from your ill-treatment. Console yourself ; I will carry back both you and your brother, and will make your peace. Go, and make my arrival known to your brother."

While the king of China was ordering his army to encamp in the place where Prince Amgiad encountered him, the latter went back to give an account to the king of the Magi, who was waiting for him with the greatest impatience. The king was extremely surprised to hear that so powerful a monarch as the king of China had undertaken such a long and painful journey through the desire of gaining some intelligence of his daughter, and that he should be so near his capital. He immediately gave orders to have him, handsomely treated, and made preparations to go and receive him in person.

In this interval, considerable clouds of dust seemed to arise from a third side of the city, and the news soon came, that a third army was approaching. This circumstance obliged the king to stop, and request Amgiad again to go and see what was the cause of it. The prince departed, and this time he took his brother Assad with him. They discovered that this was the army of Camaralzaman, their father, who was come to search after them. He had showed signs of the greatest grief at having destroyed them, when the emir Giondar at last informed him in what manner he had preserved their lives. This made the king resolve to go and discover them, in whatever country they might be.

This afflicted father embraced the two princes with tears of joy, the first he had for a long time shed which had not been tinged with the deepest affliction. The princes had no sooner informed him of the arrival of his father-in-law, the king of China, on the very same day, than he went with them, accompanied by a very few attendants, to see him in his camp. They had not proceeded far on

their road, before they perceived a fourth army, which seemed to advance in perfect order, and to come from the side towards Persia. Camaralzaman desired his sons to go and see to whom that army belonged, and said that he would wait for them where he was. They departed immediately, and when they got up to it, they presented themselves to the king, who commanded it. After saluting him with the greatest respect, they asked him his motive for coming thus near to the capital of the king of the Magi.

The grand vizier, who was present, took upon himself to return an answer. "The monarch to whom you have addressed yourself," he replied, "is called Schahzaman, king of the Islands of the Children of Khaledan, who has travelled for a great length of time, with all the attendants you see, in search of his son, Prince Camaralzaman, who left his dominions many years ago without making him acquainted with it. If you should happen to know anything relative to him, you will afford the king the greatest possible pleasure by giving him the information." To this speech the princes made no other reply than that they would come back in a little time with an answer. They then set off at full speed to Camaralzaman, to announce to him the cause of the arrival of the last army, and that it belonged to King Schahzaman, who was there in person.

Astonishment and joy, mixed with regret at having left the king, his father, without taking leave of him, had so powerful an effect upon Camaralzaman, that he fainted away as soon as he learnt that his father was so near him. He at length, through the assistance of Amgiad and Assad, who did all they could to comfort him, returned to his senses; and when he thought he had acquired sufficient strength, he went and threw himself at his father's feet. A more tender or affecting interview between a parent and son had hardly ever been witnessed. Schahzaman affectingly chided Camaralzaman for his unkindness in leaving him in so unfeeling and cruel a manner; and the latter showed the deepest regret and compunction at the fault, which love alone had caused.

The three kings and Queen Margiana continued three days at the court of the king of the Magi, who entertained them in the most magnificent and splendid manner. These three days were also remarkable for the marriage of Prince Assad with Queen Margiana, and Prince Amgiad with Bostana, in consideration of the essential service she had afforded his brother. At length, the three kings and Queen Margiana with her husband each retired to their separate dominions. With respect to Prince Amgiad, the king of the Magi, who was at a very advanced age, felt so strong an attachment to him that he placed his crown upon his head. Amgiad then used all his endeavours to abolish the idolatrous worship of fire, and instead of it to establish the Mussulman religion throughout his kingdom.

THE HISTORY OF NOUREDDIN AND THE BEAUTIFUL PERSIAN.

THE city of Balsora had been, for a long time, the capital of a kingdom which was tributary to the caliphs. The king who ruled over it during the life of the caliph Haroun Alraschid, was called Zinebi. The caliph and this king were the offspring of two brothers, and were consequently cousins. Zinebi, who was unwilling to trust the administration of his government to one vizier only, made choice of two, Khacan and Saouy.

The character of the former was distinguished by mildness, liberality, and kindness; his pleasure consisted in obliging all who transacted any business

with him : he granted them every favour that was in his power, consistent with that justice he held himself bound to administer. The whole court of Balsora, the city, and every part of the kingdom, held him in the highest estimation, and re-echoed with the commendations he so well deserved.

Saouy, on the contrary, was a very different man. His mind was a constant prey to fretfulness and chagrin. He repulsed every one who came near him without any distinction of rank or quality. Besides this, his avarice was so great, that instead of doing good and deriving credit from the immense wealth he possessed, he even denied himself the common necessities of life. No one indeed could endure him, nor was a word in his praise ever heard from the mouth of a single person. And what increased this general aversion was his great hatred of Khacan, whose benevolent and generous actions he always endeavoured to represent in a bad point of view, and to the disadvantage of that excellent minister. He was also continually doing him every ill office in the ear of the king.

One day after the council, the king amused himself by conversing in a familiar manner with these two ministers, and some other members of the council. The subject happened to turn upon those female slaves, whom it is the custom amongst us to purchase, and who are held by their possessors nearly in the rank of lawful wives. Some were of opinion that beauty and elegance of form in a slave were a full and adequate compensation for the want of such qualifications in those females with whom, either for the sake of splendid alliance or from motives of interest, a connexion in marriage has been formed.

Others maintained, and Khacan was of the number, that mere beauty and the charms of person by no means comprehended all that was requisite ; that these qualities should be accompanied by wit, understanding, modesty, and pleasing manners ; and, if possible, with a variety of knowledge and accomplishments. To persons who have important concerns to transact, and who have passed a tedious day in the midst of painful occupation, nothing, they contended, can be so grateful, when they retire from bustle and fatigue, as a well-instructed female companion, whose conversation will equally improve and delight. On the other hand, to possess a slave merely to look at, with a view to gratify a passion common to all animated nature, is, they said, to differ in nothing from the brutes of the field.

The king was of the latter party, which he proved, by ordering Khacan to purchase for him a slave, who, perfect in beauty and in all exterior charms, should, above everything, possess a well-cultivated mind.

Saouy had been of a contrary opinion to Khacan, and jealous of the honour done him by the king : "Sire," said he, "it will be extremely difficult to find so accomplished a slave as your majesty requires ; and if found, which I can scarcely believe possible, she will be cheaply procured at the expense of ten thousand pieces of gold." "Saouy," replied the king, "you seem to think this too large a price. It would be so, perhaps, for you, but is not for me." At the same time he ordered his grand treasurer, who was present, to remit the above sum to Khacan.

As soon as Khacan returned home, he sent to require the attendance of all those who traded in slaves, and charged them, when they should find such a female slave as he described, to give him immediate notice of it. The brokers, equally anxious to oblige the vizier Khacan, and to promote their own interest, engaged to use every means in their power to procure such a one as he wished ; and, indeed, a day seldom passed in which they did not bring some one before him, in whom, however, he always found defects.

Early one morning, while Khacan was on his way to the royal palace, a



broker taking hold of his stirrup, presented himself with great eagerness, and informed him that a Persian merchant, who had arrived very late the preceding evening, had a slave to sell, of a beauty much beyond what he had ever beheld; and with respect to understanding and knowledge, the merchant assured him that she exceeded anything the world had ever known.

Khacan, delighted with the news, which would, he hoped, afford him a good opportunity of making his court, having desired that the slave might be brought to him on his return from the palace, continued on his way.

The broker did not fail to wait upon the vizier at the hour appointed, and Khacan found the slave possessed of a beauty so much above his expectation, that he immediately gave her the name of the Beautiful Persian. Being a man of great knowledge and penetration, he soon discovered, by the conversation he held with her, that he would search in vain for any slave who could exceed her in all the qualities required by the king. He inquired, therefore, of the broker, what was the sum demanded for her by the Persian merchant.

"Sir," replied the broker, "the merchant, who is a man of few words, protests that he is not able to make the smallest abatement of ten thousand pieces of gold. He has assured me in the most solemn manner, that without taking into the account his own care, pains, and time, he has expended very nearly the above sum in various masters for the improvement of her person or mind, joined to the unavoidable expense of dress and maintenance. Having judged her, from the very moment that he purchased her, in her early infancy, worthy of royal regard, he spared nothing in her education that might lead to the attainment of so high an honour. She plays on every instrument; sings and dances to admiration; writes better than the most skilful masters; makes exquisite verses; there are no books she has not read; nor is it, perhaps, too much to assert, that there never existed till now so accomplished a slave."

The vizier Khacan, who understood the merits of the Beautiful Persian much better than the broker, who merely repeated what the merchant had told him, was unwilling to defer the purchase to a future day; he sent, therefore, one of his people to the place where the broker informed him the merchant might be found, to desire his immediate attendance.

As soon as he arrived, "It is not," said Khacan, "for myself that I am desirous to purchase your slave, but for the king. You must, however, propose a more moderate price than that which the broker has mentioned to me."

"Sir," replied the merchant, "it would do me infinite honour to be allowed to present her to his majesty, but I am aware that such a proceeding would not become a merchant like me. All that I wish is this, that the money which I have actually expended in her education may be repaid me. I may, I think, assert with confidence, that his majesty will be perfectly contented with the purchase he may make."

The vizier Khacan was not inclined to protract the bargain; he ordered the sum to be paid to the merchant, who, before he withdrew, addressed the vizier as follows: "Since, sir, the slave you have purchased is intended for the king, allow me the honour to inform you that she is exceedingly fatigued with the long journey she has so lately made, and, though her present beauty may well seem incomparable, yet she will appear quite a different person if you retain her in your own house about a fortnight, securing to her, in the meantime, such attentions as may be necessary. At the expiration of this she will, when you present her to the king, insure you equal honour and reward, and entitle me, I hope, to your thanks. You may perceive that the sun has rather injured her complexion; but, when she shall have used the bath a few times, and be adorned in such a manner as your taste will direct, be assured, sir, she will be

so changed that you will find her of a beauty infinitely beyond what you can at present conceive."

Khacan thought the advice of the merchant very proper, and determined to follow it. He allotted to the Beautiful Persian an apartment near that of his wife, whom he requested to allow the slave a place at her own table, and treat her in every respect as a lady belonging to the king. He further desired that his wife would cause the most magnificent dresses possible to be made, and such as should be peculiarly becoming to her beautiful charge, whom, before he quitted, he thus addressed: "The good fortune I have just procured to you, cannot possibly be greater. It is for the king that I have purchased you, who will, I trust, be more satisfied in possessing you than I am in having acquitted myself of the commission with which I have been charged. I am desirous, however, to inform you that I have a son, who, though possessed of understanding, has all the inconsiderate rashness of youth. As you will sometimes unavoidably meet him, I mention this to put you on your guard." The Beautiful Persian thanked him for his information and advice, and assured him she would profit by it. After this the vizier withdrew.

Noureddin, for thus was the son of the vizier called, was accustomed to enter without restraint the apartment of his mother, with whom he usually took his meals. He was of an extremely fine person, young, agreeable, intrepid; having moreover a great deal of wit, and expressing himself with extraordinary facility, he had the enviable gift of being able to carry, by persuasion, every point he wished. From the moment of his first interview with the Beautiful Persian, although he knew from the solemn assurance of his father that she had been purchased for the king, he put upon himself no restraint whatever to guard him against the effects of love; but permitting himself to be allured by her charms, with which he was struck from the first, and his passion increasing by the delight he experienced in conversing with her, he determined to employ every means in his power to obtain her from the king.

On the other hand, the Beautiful Persian was extremely well pleased with Noureddin. "The vizier does me great honour," said she to herself, "in purchasing me for the king of Balsora. I should, however, have esteemed myself very happy if he had designed me only for his son."

Noureddin was very assiduous to profit by the opportunities he had of beholding the object of his passion, to converse, to laugh, to jest with her. Never did he quit her, except when compelled by his mother, who would often complain: "My son, it is not becoming a young man like you to waste so much time in a female's apartment. Go and labour to render yourself worthy of one day succeeding to the honour and dignities of your father."

As in consequence of the long journey which the Beautiful Persian had lately taken, much time had elapsed since she had attended the bath, about five or six days after she had been purchased, the wife of the vizier gave orders to have their own bath prepared. She sent thither the Beautiful Persian, accompanied with a train of female slaves, who were commanded to render her every possible service and attention. On her coming out of the bath, she was arrayed in a most magnificent dress, which had been provided for her. The vizier's lady had given herself the more trouble on the occasion, from a desire of claiming a merit with her husband; and that he might perceive how much she interested herself in whatever concerned his happiness.

Upon leaving the bath, the Beautiful Persian, a thousand times handsomer than when Khacan purchased her, appeared before the wife of the vizier, who scarcely knew her again.

Having gracefully kissed her hand, she thus addressed her: "I know not, madam, how I may appear to you in the dress you have had the goodness to

order for me. Your women, who assure me it so well becomes me that they hardly know me again, are, I believe, inclined to flatter : it is to yourself that I wish to appeal. If, however, they should speak the truth, it is to you, madam, that I am indebted for all the advantages it gives me."

"Oh ! my daughter," replied the vizier's lady, with the greatest expression of joy, "what my women have told you is no flattery. I am a better judge than they ; and without any consideration of your dress, which, however, becomes you wonderfully, be assured you bring with you from the bath a beauty so infinitely above what you possessed before, that I scarcely know you again. If I imagined the bath was still sufficiently warm, I would partake of it myself, as I am of an age that requires me to use it frequently." "Madam," replied the Beautiful Persian, "I have no words to express my sense of the kind things you have done for me, who can have so little merited them. With respect to the bath, it is admirable ; but if you have an intention of using it, there is no time to be lost, as I have no doubt your women will inform you."

The wife of the vizier reflecting that many days had elapsed since she bathed last, was desirous of profiting by the opportunity. Having declared this to her women, they soon provided all the requisites for the occasion. But before she went to the bath, she commanded two little female slaves to remain near the Beautiful Persian, who had retired to her apartment ; giving them a strict order not to permit Nouredin to enter it, should he arrive during her absence.

While the lady was in the bath, Nouredin came, and not finding his mother in her apartment, he went towards that of the Beautiful Persian, where, in the antechamber, he found the two slaves. He inquired of them for his mother, when they informed him she was in the bath. "And where is the beautiful princess?" "She is just returned from thence," they replied, "and is now in her chamber, where we cannot allow you to enter, according to a strict order we have received from the lady, your mother."

The chamber of the Beautiful Persian was only secured by a tapestry hanging. Nouredin advanced to enter. The two slaves opposed themselves to prevent it. He took each of them by the arm, turned them out of the antechamber, and locked the door. They ran to the bath, making loud and bitter complaints, and in tears informed their lady that Nouredin had driven them from their post, and in contempt of their remonstrance had entered the chamber of the Beautiful Persian.

The excessive boldness of her son afflicted the good lady extremely. She instantly quitted the bath, and dressed herself with all possible haste, but before she had finished and could arrive at the chamber of the Beautiful Persian, Nouredin had left it and was gone away.

The Beautiful Persian was extremely astonished when she saw the wife of the vizier bathed in tears, and with the air of a person distracted. "Madam," said she, "may I presume to ask what it is that so much afflicts you ? Has any accident befallen you at the bath that you have been compelled to quit it so soon?"

"What !" cried the vizier's lady, "can you ask this question with so tranquil an air, after my son Nouredin has been in your chamber alone with you ? Could a greater misfortune possibly happen either to him or me."

"I beseech you, madam," returned the Beautiful Persian, "to inform me what evil can accrue to yourself, or your son, in consequence of his having been in my chamber?" "How," replied the vizier's lady, "has not my husband informed you that you were purchased for the king ; and has he not already cautioned you to take care that Nouredin should not approach you?"

"I have not forgotten his injunction, madam," replied the Beautiful Persian; "but Nouredin came to inform me that the vizier, his father, had changed his intention; and that instead of reserving me for the king as he had purposed, he had presented me to him. I believed what he told me, madam; and having been from my earliest infancy accustomed to the habits and expectations of a slave, it was as little in my will as in my power to oppose myself to his inclinations. Permit me to add that I have submitted with less repugnance, having conceived a passion for your son, in consequence of the opportunities we have had of seeing each other. I resign without regret the hope of belonging to the king, and shall esteem myself perfectly happy to be allowed to pass my whole life with Nouredin."

"Would to God," said the vizier's lady, "that what you tell me were true; it would give me very great delight. But believe me, Nouredin is an impostor; he has deceived you, as it is impossible that his father should have made him the present he talks of. Wretched young man! wretched parents! and especially his father, from the dreadful consequences he will have too much reason to apprehend. Neither my tears nor prayers will be able to soften him, or obtain pardon for his son, whom he will sacrifice to his just resentment, when he shall be informed of the violence he has committed." Having finished these words, she wept bitterly, and her slaves, who were not less anxious for the safety of Nouredin, followed her example.

The vizier Khacan arrived soon after this, and was greatly astonished to find his wife and slaves bathed in tears, and the Beautiful Persian extremely melancholy. He inquired the cause of their grief; upon which, instead of giving him any answer, they redoubled their cries and tears. This conduct so increased his surprise that addressing himself to his wife, "I insist absolutely," said he, "that you inform me what it is that occasions this sorrow."

The unhappy lady could not avoid compliance. "Promise me, however," said she to her husband, "that you will not impute blame to me in what I am going to tell you. I assure you it has not happened from any fault of mine." Then without waiting for his reply, "While I was in the bath, attended by my women," continued she, "your son arrived and availed himself of this fatal opportunity to persuade the Beautiful Persian that you had relinquished your intention of giving her to the king, and that you had presented her to him. I will not say, but leave you to imagine what he may have done, after having been guilty of so notorious a falsehood. This is the cause of my affliction, on your account, and on his also, for whom I have not the courage to entreat your clemency."

It is impossible to express how great was the mortification of the vizier Khacan, when he was informed of the insolence of his son. "Ah!" cried he, beating his breast, biting his hands, and tearing his beard, "is it thus, wretched child, unworthy to live, is it thus that you precipitate your father into a pit of infamy, from the highest degree of happiness? That you destroy him and with him destroy yourself. The king, to revenge this offence, which attacks his very person, will not be satisfied with your blood or mine."

His lady endeavoured to comfort him. "Do not afflict yourself," said she; "I can easily, by disposing of a part of my jewels, procure ten thousand pieces of gold, with which you may purchase a more beautiful slave, and one more worthy of the king." "What! do you believe," returned the vizier, "that I am capable of being so unhappy at the loss of ten thousand pieces of gold? It is not this that afflicts me; what I lament is the loss of honour, which to me is the most precious of all earthly things." "Nevertheless," said the lady, "it appears to me, sir, that what can be repaired by money is not of such very great importance."

"Surely," replied the vizier, "you are not ignorant that Saouy is my most inveterate enemy. Can you believe, that as soon as he shall become acquainted with the affair, he will not go immediately to the king to triumph at my expense. 'Your majesty,' he will say, 'is accustomed to speak of the affection and zeal which Khacan shows for your service. He has, however, lately proved how little he is worthy of so great consideration. He has received ten thousand pieces of gold to purchase you a slave. He has fairly acquitted himself of this honourable charge, and the slave he has bought is the handsomest ever beheld; but instead of bringing her to your majesty, he has thought proper to make a present of her to his son. 'My son,' said he, 'take this slave; you are more worthy of her than the king.' 'His son,' he will add, with his usual malice, 'has now possession of her, and every day revels in her charms. That the affair is precisely as I have had the honour to state it, your majesty may be assured by examining into it yourself.' Do you not perceive," added the vizier, "that, in consequence of such representation, I am every moment liable to have the guards of the king force my house, and carry off the beautiful slave. It is easy to imagine all the unavoidable evils which will ensue."

"Sir," answered the lady to this discourse of the vizier, her husband, "the malice of Saouy is, I confess, extreme, and capable of giving to the affair in question, should it come to his knowledge, a most injurious turn. But how can he, or any person, be informed of what passes in the interior of this house? And even if it should be suspected, and the king should interrogate you on the subject, it is easy to say, that after having examined the slave, you did not find her so worthy of his majesty's regard as she at first appeared; that the merchant had deceived you; that she is, it is true, of incomparable beauty, but beyond measure deficient in those qualities of the mind which it had been boasted she possessed. The king will rely on your word, and Saouy will again have the mortification of not having succeeded in his wicked intention of ruining you, which he has already so often attempted in vain. Take confidence, then; and if you allow me to advise, send for the brokers, inform them that you are by no means satisfied with the Beautiful Persian, and charge them to look out for another slave."

This counsel appeared to the vizier Khacan very judicious. His mind became in consequence more tranquil, and he determined to follow it. He did not, however, in the least abate of his anger towards his son.

Noureddin did not appear during the whole day; and fearing to seek an asylum with any of those young friends whose houses he was in the habit of frequenting, from the apprehension that his father would search for him there, he went to some distance from the city, and took refuge in a garden where he had never before been, and was wholly unknown. He did not return home till very late, and after the time that he well knew his father had retired, when he prevailed upon his mother's women to let him in, which they did with great caution and silence. He went out the next morning before his father was risen; and was obliged to take the same precautions during a whole month, which was no small mortification to him. The women, however, did not in the least flatter him. They told him frankly that the vizier, his father, had conceived against him the greatest possible displeasure, and had, moreover, determined to destroy him whenever he should come in his way.

The vizier's lady knew from her women that Noureddin returned home every night, but she had not the courage to solicit her husband in his favour. At length she summoned resolution to mention the subject. "Sir," said she, "I have not ventured hitherto to speak to you concerning your son. I entreat

you now to allow me to ask what you intend to do with him? No son can have been more criminal towards a parent, than Nouredin has been towards you. He has deprived you of great honour, and of the satisfaction of presenting to the king a slave so highly accomplished as the Beautiful Persian. All this I acknowledge. But after all, what is your intention? Do you wish to destroy him absolutely? Are you aware that in doing so, you may bring upon yourself a very heavy calamity, instead of the comparatively light one which has been at present sustained? Do you not fear that the world, ever full of malignity, may in its endeavours to discover the reason why your son is driven from you, penetrate the real cause, which you are so properly anxious to have concealed? Should this happen, you will fall into precisely the same misfortune, which it is so much your interest to avoid."

"Madam," replied the vizier, "what you have said has been dictated by the most perfect good sense; but I cannot resolve to pardon Nouredin till I shall have chastised him in some degree as he deserves." "He will be sufficiently punished," replied the lady, "should you put in execution what has this moment occurred to me. Your son returns home every night, and departs in the morning before you are risen. Wait this evening till his arrival, and let him suppose that you intend to kill him. I will come to his assistance, when you, by appearing to grant his life to my prayers, may oblige him to take the Beautiful Persian on any terms you wish; I know he loves her, and the beautiful slave does not dislike him."

Khacan was well pleased with this advice. Before, therefore, Nouredin, who arrived at his accustomed hour, was allowed to enter the house, he placed himself behind the door, and immediately as it was opened, flew upon his son, and threw him under his feet. Nouredin, looking up, beheld his father with a poniard in his hand ready to stab him.

The mother of Nouredin arrived at this instant, and seizing the vizier by the arm, "What are you doing, sir?" cried she. "Give way," said he, "that I may kill this unworthy son." "Ah! sir," replied the mother, "sooner shall you kill me; never will I permit you to imbrue your hands in your own blood." Nouredin took advantage of this moment. "Father," cried he, his eyes suffused in tears, "I entreat your pity and forbearance. Grant me the pardon I presume to ask, in the name of that Being, from whom you will yourself hope forgiveness at that day, when we shall all appear before him."

Khacan having suffered the poniard to be wrested from him, quitted his hold of Nouredin, who instantly threw himself at his father's feet, which he passionately kissed, to express how sincerely he repented having given him offence. "Nouredin," said he, "thank your mother. It is from respect to her that I pardon you. I will even give you the Beautiful Persian, on condition that you engage, on oath, not to consider her as a slave, but as your lawful wife, whom you will never, on any account, either sell or repudiate. As she has infinitely more understanding and conduct than yourself, she may be able to moderate those extravagancies of youth, by which you seem so likely to be undone."

Nouredin, who had not dared to expect so much indulgence, thanked his father with all imaginable expressions of gratitude, and readily took the oath he desired. The Beautiful Persian and he were perfectly satisfied with each other, and the vizier was very well pleased at their union.

Under these circumstances, Khacan did not think it prudent to wait till the king should speak to him of the commission he had given him, but took every opportunity himself of introducing the subject, and of pointing out the difficulties he experienced in acquitting himself to his majesty's satisfaction. He

conducted indeed the affair with so much address, that in a short time the king thought of it no more. Saouy had, it is true, learned something of what had happened, but Khacan continued so much in favour, that he did not venture to speak of it.

More than a year elapsed, during which time this delicate business had gone on much more fortunately than the minister could have any reason to expect; when one day, being in the bath, which some very urgent affair obliged him to quit, heated as he was, the cold air struck him so forcibly as to bring on an immediate inflammation of the lungs, attended with fever, which confined him to his bed. His illness continued to increase; he soon became sensible that his last moments were approaching; he therefore addressed Nouredin, who never quitted his side, in these terms: "My son," said he, "I know not whether I have made the use I ought to have done of the great riches which the goodness of God has bestowed upon me. You see that they are of no avail to protect me from the hand of Death. But the only thing that I am anxious to impress upon your mind at this awful moment is, that you will not fail to remember the promise you have made me with respect to the Beautiful Persian. In the confidence of your integrity I die content."

These were the last words which the vizier uttered. He expired immediately after, to the inexpressible grief of his family, the city, and the court. The king lamented the loss of a wise, zealous, and faithful minister, the city, of a friend and benefactor. Never was there seen at Balsora so honourable a funeral. The viziers, emirs, and indeed all the grandes of the court, were eager to support his bier, which, in succession, they bore on their shoulders to the place of burial, while all the citizens, rich and poor, accompanied the procession in tears.

Nouredin gave every proof of the most serious affliction for the loss he had sustained. He suffered no person, for a long time to have access to him. At length, however, he one day gave permission that one of his intimate friends should be admitted. This friend endeavoured to comfort him, and finding him inclined to attend, represented to him that every respect which duty and affection could claim, being paid to the memory of his father, and even the most rigid decorum fully satisfied, it was time for him to reappear in the world to associate with his friends, and to maintain that rank and character which were due to his birth and merits. "We offend," added he, "against the laws of nature and civilized life, if we do not render to our deceased parents every respect which tenderness dictates; and the world will very justly censure our neglect of it, as a proof of savage insensibility; but when we have acquitted ourselves in such a manner as to be above the possibility of reproach, it then becomes our duty to reassume our former habits, and to live in the world like a person belonging to it. Dry up then your tears, and recover that air of gaiety which was wont to diffuse such universal joy amongst those that had the pleasure of your acquaintance."

The advice of this friend was reasonable enough, and Nouredin would have avoided many misfortunes which ensued, if he had followed it with the moderation which it required. He became an easy convert to the persuasions of his friend, whom he immediately entertained with great good-will; and begged, when he was retiring, that he would visit him again the next day, and bring with him three or four of their common friends. By degrees, he formed a society of ten persons, all nearly of his own age, with whom he passed his time in continual feasts and scenes of pleasure; and not a day elapsed, that he did not dismiss every one of them with some present.

Sometimes, to make the satisfaction of his friends more complete, Nouredin would order the Beautiful Persian to be of their parties. Though she had the

complaisance to comply cheerfully with his commands, she much disapproved his excessive profusion; on which subject she freely gave him her opinion: "I have no doubt," said she, "that the vizier, your father, has left you great riches: but do not take it ill, if I, a slave, remind you, that, however great they may be, you will assuredly see the end of them, if you continue in your present style of living. It is reasonable sometimes to regale and entertain one's friends, but to run every day the same career of unbounded expense, is to pursue the sure road to want and wretchedness. It were much better, sir, for your reputation and honour, that you followed the steps of your deceased father, and were in the way of obtaining those offices in which he secured so much glory."

Noureddin listened to the Beautiful Persian with a smile, and when she had finished, "My love," said he, with continued gaiety, "have done with this solemn discourse, and let us talk only of pleasure. My late father held me constantly in so great restraint, that I am now very well pleased to enjoy the liberty after which I so often formerly sighed. There will be always time to adopt the regular plan you speak of; a man at my time of life ought to indulge in the delights of youth."

What contributed, perhaps, more than anything to the embarrassment of Noureddin's affairs, was his extreme aversion to settle with his steward. Whenever the steward and his book appeared, they were instantly dismissed: "Get away," said he, "I can trust your honesty. Only take care that I have always good cheer." "You, sir," replied the steward, "are my master. Allow me, nevertheless, very humbly to remind you of the proverb, which says, 'He who spends much, and reckons little, will be a beggar before he is a wise man.' Not content, sir, with the enormous expense of your table, your profusion is utterly without bounds. Were your treasures as huge as mountains, they would not be sufficient." "Begone, I tell you," repeated Noureddin, "I want none of your lectures: continue to provide for my table, and give yourself no further concern."

In the mean time, the friends of Noureddin were very constant at his table, and lost no opportunity of profiting by his easy temper. They were ever praising and flattering him, and pretending to discover some extraordinary virtue or grace in the most trifling action. But, especially, they never neglected to extol to the skies everything that belonged to him; and, indeed, they found their account in doing so. "Sir," said one of them, "I passed the other day by the estate which you have in such a place; nothing can be more magnificent or better furnished than the house; and the garden belonging to it is an absolute paradise of delights." "I am quite charmed that you are pleased with it," answered Noureddin. "Let them bring the pen, ink, and paper; the place is yours: I beg to hear no words on the occasion, I give it you with all my heart." Others had no sooner commended one of his houses, baths, or public buildings, erected for the accommodation of strangers, a property very valuable from the considerable revenue it brought in, than they were instantly given away. The Beautiful Persian represented to him the injury he did himself; but, instead of regarding her admonitions, he continued in the same course of extravagance, till he had parted with everything.

Noureddin, in short, attended to nothing for the space of a year but feasting and merriment, and to the lavishing away the vast property which his ancestors, and the good vizier, his father, had acquired or preserved with so much care and attention. The year had hardly gone by, when he heard one day a rapping at the door of his hall while he was at table. He had dismissed his slaves and shut himself up with his friends, that they might pursue their pleasures free from interruption.

One of his companions offered to rise, but Noureddin advanced before him,

and went to the door himself; when, finding his steward, he withdrew a little way out of the hall to hear what he wanted, leaving the door partly open.

The friend who had risen, having perceived the steward, and curious to hear what he might have to say to Noureddin, placed himself between the hangings and the door, when he heard him thus address his master: "Sir," said he, "I beg a thousand pardons for interrupting you in the midst of your pleasures, but what I have to communicate is, as it appears to me, of so great importance, that I could not, consistently with my duty, avoid taking this liberty. I have just been making up my accounts, and I find that what I have long foreseen, and of which I have often warned you, is now arrived; that not the smallest coin remains of all the sums I have received from you to defray your expenses. Whatever other funds you have assigned me, are also exhausted; and your farmers, and various tenants have made it appear to me so very evident that you have made over to others the estates they rented of you, that I can demand nothing from them. Here are my accounts, sir, examine them; if you wish that I should continue to serve you, assign me other funds; or, otherwise, permit me to retire." Noureddin was so astonished at this discourse, that he could not answer a word.

The friend who had been listening, having heard all that passed, returned immediately, and communicated it to the rest of the party. "You will please yourselves," said he, "in profiting or not by this information; with regard to myself, I declare to you, that this is the last time you will ever see me in Noureddin's house." "Nay," replied they, "if it be as you have represented, we have no more business here than yourself; he will scarcely see us again."

Noureddin returned at this moment; and, though he endeavoured to put a good face upon the matter, and to inspire his friends with their accustomed hilarity, he could not so dissemble but that they readily discovered the truth of what they had just heard. He was, indeed, hardly returned to his seat, when one of the company rose from his. "Sir," said he, "I am very sorry that I cannot partake of the pleasure of your society any longer, and hope you will excuse my departure." "What obliges you to leave us so soon?" said Noureddin. "Sir," replied he, "my wife is brought to bed to-day, and you are well aware that in such cases the presence of a husband is peculiarly necessary." He then made a very low bow, and departed. Immediately afterwards another withdrew upon some pretence or other, and the whole party, one after another, soon did the same, till there remained not one of all the friends, who till this day had been the constant companions of Noureddin.

Noureddin entertained not the least suspicion of the resolution taken by his friends, not to see him again. He went to the apartment of the Beautiful Persian, to speak with her in private of the information he had received from his steward, when he gave evident proofs of very sincere repentance at finding his affairs in such great disorder.

"Sir," said the Beautiful Persian, "permit me to tell you, that on this subject you never would regard any opinion but your own; you now see the event. I was not in the least deceived when I foretold the melancholy consequences you might expect, and great has been my concern that I could not make you at all sensible of the evils that awaited you. Whenever I have been anxious to speak to you on the subject, 'Let us enjoy ourselves,' you would say, 'and profit of the happy moments, when fortune is favourable. She will not, probably, be always in such good humour.' I was not, however, in the wrong, when I reminded you that we are ourselves the authors of our own fortune, by the wisdom of our conduct. You would never attend to me, and I became compelled, in spite of my wishes, to leave you to yourself."

"I must acknowledge," replied Noureddin, "that I have been very wrong

in neglecting the prudent advice you have given me, the dictates of your admirable wisdom ; but, if I have expended all my estate, consider that it has been with a few select friends whom I have long known ; men of worth and honour, and who, full of kindness and gratitude, will not, I am sure, now abandon me."

"Sir," replied the Beautiful Persian, "if you have no other source than the gratitude of your friends, believe me, your hopes are ill founded, and of this a very short time will probably convince you."

"Charming Persian," said Nouredin, "I have a better opinion than you seem to have of their disposition to serve me. I will visit all of them to-morrow morning, before their ordinary hour of coming hither, and you shall see me return with a large sum of money, which they together will have contributed to my wants. I will then, as I have fully resolved, change my manner of life, and improve the money I have obtained, in some way of merchandise."

On the next day, Nouredin failed not to call on his ten friends, who all lived in the same street. He knocked at the first door he came to, where one of the richest of them lived. A female slave attended, who, before she opened the door, inquired who was there ? "Tell your master," said Nouredin, "that it is Nouredin, son of the late vizier Khacan." The slave having let him in, and introduced him into a hall, went to the chamber where her master was, to inform him that Nouredin was come to wait upon him. "Nouredin !" said he, in a tone of contempt, and so loud that Nouredin heard him. "Go, tell him I am not at home ; and whenever he shall call, give him the same answer." The slave returned and informed Nouredin that she had believed her master to be within, but that she had been mistaken.

Nouredin went away confused and astonished. "Ah !" cried he, "perfidious, pitiful wretch. It was only yesterday that he protested to me I had no sincerer friend, and now he treats me thus unworthily." He proceeded to the door of another, who ordered the same reply to be given. He then waited on a third, and, in succession, on all the rest ; and received everywhere the same answer, though at the time they were every one at home.

Now it was that the mind of Nouredin became wholly engrossed with the most serious reflections, and that he discovered his irreparable fault, in having relied so fondly on these false friends, from their assiduity to surround his person.

He now saw the vanity of those protestations of regard which had been uttered amidst the enjoyment of splendid entertainments, and while they were daily experiencing the effects of his unbounded generosity. "It is true," said he to himself, tears flowing from his eyes, "it is too true that a man, happy as I have been, resembles a tree full of fruit : as long as any fruit remains on the tree, it is surrounded by those who come to partake of its produce ; but when there is nothing more to be had, it is regarded no longer, but remains stripped and abandoned." Whilst he continued in the street, he endeavoured to put some restraint upon his feelings ; but as soon as he re-entered his house, he went to the apartment of the Beautiful Persian, where he gave full scope to his affliction.

As soon as the beautiful Persian saw the wretched Nouredin, she immediately apprehended that he had not derived from his friends the assistance he had expected. "Well, sir," said she to him, "are you now convinced of the truth of what I foretold ?" "Ah, my love," cried he, "what you foresaw is but too true. Not one of them would know me, see me, speak to me. Never could I have believed it possible that persons who owe me so many obligations, and for whom I have deprived myself of everything, could have treated me so cruelly. I am no longer master of myself, and I much fear, in the deplorable and desperate condition in which I now am, that I may, unless assisted by your kind

and prudent counsels, be guilty of some very improper conduct." "Sir," replied the Beautiful Persian, "I know no other remedy for your misfortune than that of selling your slaves and furniture, on which you may subsist till Heaven shall point out some other way of extricating you from your misery."

The remedy appeared to Nouredin extremely severe; but what could he do to supply his present wants? He first sold his slaves, now a useless charge, and whose maintenance he could no longer support. He lived for some time upon the money thus produced, and when this began to fail, he ordered his furniture to be conveyed to the public mart, where it was sold, much, indeed, below its real worth, as some of it was extremely valuable, and had cost immense sums. From this sale he was enabled to live for a considerable time, but at length this resource failed also; and now, there remaining nothing more to dispose of, he came and poured out his griefs into the bosom of the Beautiful Persian.

Nouredin did not in the least expect to be addressed as he was by this prudent and generous woman. "Sir," said she, "I am your slave, and you know the late vizier, your father, purchased me for ten thousand pieces of gold. I am well aware that I am not so valuable as I was at that time; I am, however, of opinion that I may still produce a sum not much short of it. Conduct me then to the place of sale, and immediately dispose of me. With the money you will thus obtain, which will be very considerable, you may commence as merchant in some place where you are not known, and thus procure the means of living, it not in great opulence, in a way at least that may render you happy and contented."

"Ah! charming Beautiful Persian!" cried Nouredin, "is it possible that you can entertain such a thought? Have I given you such slender proofs of my affection, that you believe me capable of such meanness? And even if I could be so unworthy, must I not add to my baseness the foulest perjury, after the oath I made to my late father, which I would sooner die than break. No, never can I separate myself from one whom I love more than my existence; though by your making to me so unaccountable a proposal, it appears too evident how far your affection to me falls short of that which I feel for you."

"Sir," replied the Beautiful Persian, "your love for me is, I am convinced, equal to what you have expressed, and Heaven is my judge, whether my affection for you is less, and with what extreme repugnance I prevailed on myself to make the proposal which has so much displeased you; but to do away with the objection you offer, I have only to remind you that necessity has no law. Believe me, sir, my love for you cannot possibly be exceeded by yours for me, nor to whatever master I may belong can it ever change or cease. Never can I know any pleasure so great as our reunion will afford, if, as I hope may be the case, your affairs should ever be so prosperous as to enable you to re-purchase me. The necessity to which we are now driven is, I confess, extremely severe; but alas! what other means are left to extricate us from the misery in which we are involved?"

Nouredin, who knew too well the truth of what the Beautiful Persian had been saying to him, and having no other resource whatever to avoid the most ignominious poverty, was compelled to adopt the measure she proposed. He therefore, though with the most inexpressible regret, conveyed her to the market-place, where female slaves were sold; and addressing himself to a broker, "Hagi Hassan," said he to him, "I have a slave here whom I wish to sell; I beg of you to learn what price they will give for her."

Hagi Hassan desired Nouredin and the Beautiful Persian to enter a chamber, when the latter having removed the veil that concealed her face: "Sir," said Hagi Hassan, with much astonishment, "can I be deceived? Is not this the

slave which the late vizier your father purchased for ten thousand pieces of gold?" Noureddin assured him it was the same; and Hagi Hassan, having given him reason to expect a large sum, promised to exert all his ability to get for her the best price possible.

Hagi Hassan and Noureddin left the chamber, where the Beautiful Persian remained locked up, in search of the merchants, who being occupied in purchasing various slaves, Greeks, Franks, Africans, Tartars, and others, Hagi Hassan was obliged to wait till they had completed their business. When they had done, and were again assembled together: "My good gentlemen," said he, with much pleasantry in his looks and manner, "every round thing is not a nut, every long thing is not a fig, every red thing is not flesh, nor are all eggs fresh. I will readily agree, that in the course of your lives you have seen and purchased many slaves; but never have you beheld a single one who can in the least compare with her I am about to show you. She is the perfection of slaves. Come, follow me, and look at her. I wish you yourselves to fix the price at which I ought to put her up."

The merchants followed Hagi Hassan, who opened to them the door of the apartment where the Beautiful Persian was. They beheld her with astonishment, and immediately agreed with one voice, that they could not possibly, from the very first, set a less price upon her than four thousand pieces of gold. They then left the room, and Hagi Hassan, having fastened the door, followed them out a little way, proclaiming with a loud voice, "*The Persian slave for four thousand pieces of gold.*"

No one of the merchants had yet spoken, and they were consulting together about the sum they should bid for her, when the vizier Saouy made his appearance. Having perceived Noureddin in the market, "It should seem," said he to himself, "that Noureddin is still raising money from the sale of his effects (for he knew that he had been selling some of his furniture), and is come hither to purchase a slave." As he was advancing, Hagi Hassan cried out a second time, "*The Persian slave for four thousand pieces of gold.*"

Saouy imagined from hearing this high price, that the slave to be sold must possess very extraordinary beauty, and immediately felt a strong desire to see her. He pushed his horse forward towards Hagi Hassan, who was surrounded by the merchants. "Open the door," said he; "let me see this slave." It was contrary to custom to permit a slave to be seen by any indifferent person, after the merchants had seen her and were bargaining for her; but they had not the courage to urge their right against the authority of the vizier, nor could Hagi Hassan avoid opening the door. He then made a sign to the beautiful Persian to approach, so that Saouy might get a sight of her without alighting from his horse.

When Saouy saw a slave of such extraordinary beauty, he was beyond measure surprised, and knowing the name of the broker, as he was a person with whom he had occasionally had business: "Hagi Hassan," said he, "four thousand pieces of gold is, I think, the price at which you cry her." "Yes, sir," replied he; "the merchants whom you see have just now agreed that I should put her up at that price. I now wait their advance, and expect much more by the time they have done bidding." "I will give the money myself," said Saouy, "if no one offers more." He immediately gave the merchants a look which sufficiently expressed that he did not expect to be out-bidden. He was indeed so much feared by them all, that they took especial care not to open their lips, even to complain of the manner in which he had violated their rights.

When the vizier had waited some time, and found that none of the merchants bid against him: "Well, what do you wait for?" said he to Hagi Hassan.

"Go, find the seller, and conclude the bargain with him for four thousand pieces of gold, or learn what he intends further." He did not at present know that the slave belonged to Nouredin.

Hagi Hassan having locked the chamber door, went to talk over the affair with Nouredin. "Sir," said he, "I am very sorry to be obliged to communicate very unpleasant intelligence. Your slave is going to be sold for absolutely nothing." "How is this?" returned Nouredin. "Sir," said Hagi Hassan, "the business at first took an extremely good turn: the merchants, the moment they had seen her, without any doubt or hesitation, desired me to put her up at four thousand pieces of gold. Just as I had cried her at this price, the vizier Saouy arrived, whose presence immediately shut the mouths of all the merchants, who were evidently disposed to raise her to at least the same price which she cost the late vizier, your father. Saouy will give only four thousand pieces of gold; and it is, I assure you, much against my inclination, that I am come to report to you so unreasonable an offer. The slave is yours, and I cannot advise you to part with her at that price. You, sir, and all the world know the vizier; and, independently of the slave being worth infinitely more than the sum offered, that he is so unprincipled a man, as to be very likely to invent some pretence for not paying you even the money you may agree for."

"Hagi Hassan," replied Nouredin, "I am much obliged to you for your advice; do not imagine that I shall ever permit my slave to be sold to the enemy of my house. It is true I have great need of money, but sooner would I die in the last degree of poverty than part with her to Saouy. I have, then, one favour to request of you, that, as you are acquainted with all the customs and artifices of this sort of business, you will tell me what I must do to prevent it."

"Sir," replied Hagi Hassan, "nothing is more easy. Pretend, that having been in great wrath with your slave, you swore you would expose her in the public market, and that you have done so with no intention of selling her, but merely to acquit yourself of your oath. This will satisfy every one, and Saouy will have nothing to say against it. Be ready, then, and in the moment when I shall present her to Saouy." The vizier was already before the door. "Sir," said he, presenting her to him, "there is the slave, take her, she is yours."

Hagi Hassan had hardly finished these words, when Nouredin seized hold of the Beautiful Persian, and drawing towards her, gave her a box on the ear. "Come here, you impertinent," said he, in a tone sufficiently loud to be heard by every one, "and return home. Your abominable temper compelled me to take an oath to expose you in the public market: but as I have further occasion for you, I shall not sell you at present. It will be time enough to come to this extremity when every other remedy fails."

The vizier was extremely enraged by this action of Nouredin. "Worthless libertine," he exclaimed, "would you wish me to believe that you have anything left to dispose of except this slave?" at the same time pushing his horse directly against him, he endeavoured to seize the Beautiful Persian. Nouredin, stung to the quick by the affront the vizier had put upon him, let the Beautiful Persian go, and desiring her to wait, threw himself immediately upon the horse's bridle, and compelled him to fall back three or four paces. "You despicable old wretch," said he then to the vizier, "I would tear you to pieces this instant, if I were not restrained by regard for those about me."

As the vizier Saouy was not loved by any one, but, on the contrary, was hated by all, there was not a soul present who was not delighted at the mortification he had received, which they made known to Nouredin by various signs;

giving him to understand that if he would revenge himself in any way he liked, he would experience no opposition from them.

Saouy used every effort in his power to oblige Noureddin to let go his horse's bridle ; but the latter being a young man of great strength, encouraged by the good wishes of those present, pulled the vizier from his horse into the middle of the kennel, and having given him a great many blows, dashed his head forcibly against the pavement till it was covered with blood. Half a score of slaves who attended their master would have drawn their sabres and fallen upon Noureddin, but were prevented by the interference of the merchants. "What are you about?" said they; "if one is a vizier, do you not know that the other is a vizier's son? Let them settle their own disputes; perhaps one day they may be accommodated, but be this as it may, should you kill Noureddin, believe us, your master, powerful as he is, will not be able to screen you from justice." Noureddin, fatigued at beating the vizier, left him in the middle of the kennel, and again taking charge of the Beautiful Persian, returned home amidst the acclamations of all the people, who much commended him for what he had done.

Saouy, exceedingly bruised by the blows he had received, got up, assisted by his servants, with the greatest difficulty, when he had the mortification to find himself besmeared all over with blood and mire. Supporting himself upon the shoulders of two of his slaves, he went in his present forlorn condition immediately to the palace, and to increase his confusion, though exposed to the view of all, he was pitied by none. When he arrived near the apartment of the king, he began to cry out and to implore justice in a most pathetic manner. The king ordered him to be admitted, and as soon as he appeared, desired to know on what account he had been so ill-treated, and who it was that had put him into so lamentable a state. "Sire," exclaimed Saouy, "the being honoured with your majesty's favour, and the having a share in your important counsels, are the reasons for my being treated in this shocking manner you now behold." "I wish no useless discourse," said the king; "tell me at once the affair as it really is, and who is the offender. If he is in the wrong I shall know how to bring him to repentance."

"Sire," said Saouy, taking care to give everything a turn in his own favour, "I was going to the market of female slaves in order to purchase a cook, for whom I had occasion. On my arrival there I heard them crying a slave for four thousand pieces of gold. I desired to be conducted to this slave, whom I found the most beautiful that eyes ever beheld. Regarding her with the most extreme satisfaction, I asked to whom she belonged, when I was informed that Noureddin, the son of the late vizier Khacan, wished to part with her."

"Your majesty may remember that about two or three years since you ordered ten thousand pieces of gold to be paid that minister, with which he was charged to procure a slave. He employed it in purchasing the one in question; but instead of bringing her to your majesty, whom, it should seem, he thought unworthy of her, he presented her to his son. This son, since his father's death, has by the most unbounded extravagance, of every sort, dissipated his whole fortune, so that nothing remained to him but this slave, whom he at length determined to sell, and who was in fact this day brought to market. I sent to speak with him, when, without taking any notice of the prevarication, or rather perfidy of which his father was guilty towards your majesty, 'Noureddin,' said I to him, in the civilest manner possible, 'the merchants, as I understand, have put up your slave at four thousand pieces of gold; and I doubt not, in consequence of the competition which seems likely to take place, they will raise the price very considerably; but rely on me, and sell her for the four thousand pieces of gold; I wish to purchase her for a present to the king,

our lord and master ; this transaction will give me a good opportunity of recommending you to his majesty's favour, which you will find of infinitely more value than anything the merchants will give you.'

"Instead of answering me with the return of civility I had a right to expect, he cast upon me a look of the most insolent contempt. 'Detestable old wretch,' said he, 'sooner than sell my slave to you, I would give her to a Jew for nothing.' But, Noureddin," cried I, without allowing myself to be in a passion, great as was the provocation I had received, 'when you speak thus, you do not consider the injury you are doing the king, to whose kindness your father as well as myself owe all that we have enjoyed.'

"This remonstrance, which ought to have softened him, only irritated him the more. He now flew upon me like a madman, and without any regard to my age or dignity, pulled me off my horse, beat me till he was weary, and at last left me in the condition in which your majesty now sees me. I beseech you to consider that it is from a regard for your interests that I have suffered so shocking an insult." Having said this, he hung down his head, and turning himself away, gave free course to his tears, which flowed in abundance.

The king, imposed upon, and highly incensed against Noureddin, by this artful relation, showed in his countenance marks of the most violent anger, and turning round to the captain of the guard, who was near him, "Take," said he, "forty of your men, go and plunder Noureddin's house, and having ordered it to be razed to the ground, return hither with him and his slave."

The captain of the guard did not quit the apartment of the king so expeditiously but that a groom of the chamber who had heard the order given, got the start of him. The name of this officer was Sangiar, who having been formerly a slave belonging to the vizier Khacan, had been introduced by him into the king's household, where by degrees he had been raised to the rank he held.

Sangiar, full of gratitude to his ancient master and of affection for Noureddin, whom he had known from the hour of his birth, and fully aware of the hatred which Saouy had long entertained against the house of Khacan, trembled with apprehension when he heard the order. "The conduct of Noureddin," said he to himself, "cannot be so bad as Saouy represents it. He has prejudiced the king, who will condemn Noureddin to death without giving him the least opportunity of justifying himself." So quick was Sangiar in his movements that he arrived just in time to inform Noureddin of what had passed at the palace, and to give him an opportunity of escaping with the Beautiful Persian. He knocked at the door in so violent a manner, that Noureddin, who for a long time had been without a servant, came and opened it himself without a moment's delay. "My dear lord," said Sangiar to him, "there is no safety for you at Balsora ; depart, and save yourself, without losing an instant."

"How is this !" replied Noureddin ; "what has happened to oblige me to depart so soon ?" "Go, I entreat you," resumed Sangiar, "and take your slave with you. Saouy has just related to the king, in such a manner as suited his purpose, what has passed between you and him, and the captain of the guard will be here in an instant with forty soldiers, to seize you and her. Take these forty pieces of gold to assist you in searching for some place of security ; I would give you more, but this is all I have about me. Excuse my departing immediately ; I leave you much against my inclination, but it is for the benefit of us both, as I am much interested that the captain of the guard should not see me." Sangiar scarcely received the thanks of Noureddin and withdrew.

Noureddin went to acquaint the Beautiful Persian of the necessity they were

both under of taking themselves away that very instant. She only waited to put on her veil, when they quitted the house together, and had the good fortune not only to get out of the city without being discovered, but even to arrive at the mouth of the Euphrates, which was not far distant, and to embark on board a vessel then ready to weigh anchor.

Indeed, at the very moment they arrived, the captain was upon the deck in the midst of his passengers: "My friends," said he, "are you all here? Have any of you any business in the city, or have you forgotten anything?" To this they replied they were all ready, and he might sail whenever he pleased. Noureddin was no sooner on board than he inquired to what place the vessel was bound, and was delighted to find it was going to Bagdad. The captain then gave orders to weigh anchor and set sail, and, favoured by the wind, the ship was soon far distant from Balsora.

Let us now return to what happened at Balsora, while Noureddin was escaping the rage of the king.

The captain of the guard hastened to the house of Noureddin and knocked at the door. Finding that no one answered, he caused it to be broken open, when immediately the soldiers rushed in in a body, and searched into every part of the house, but could find neither Noureddin nor his slave. The captain then made inquiry amongst the neighbours, but in vain; for even if they could have given any account, they were so cordially attached to Noureddin, that not one of them would have said anything to his injury. While the men were plundering and destroying the house, he went to inform the king of his want of success. "Let them search every place where it is possible they can be concealed," replied the king, "I must have them found."

The captain of the guard now returned to make fresh inquiries, when the king, unwilling any longer to detain the vizier, dismissed him with honour. "Go, home," said he, "and give yourself no further concern about the punishment of Noureddin. I will take care to avenge his insolence."

That no means might be left untried, the king ordered it to be proclaimed through the city, that he would reward any one with a thousand pieces of gold who should apprehend Noureddin and his slave, and that he would severely punish whoever might conceal them; but, notwithstanding all his care and diligence, he could obtain no information of them; so that the vizier Saouy had no other consolation, except having the king on his side.

In the mean time, Noureddin and the Beautiful Persian were pursuing their journey with all the good fortune possible; and in due time arrived at the city of Bagdad. As soon as the captain perceived the place, pleased to be so near the completion of his voyage: "Rejoice, my friends," he exclaimed, addressing himself to the passengers; "there is the great and wonderful city, where people from every part of the world are constantly flocking; you will there find inhabitants without number; and instead of the chilling blasts of winter, or the oppressive heats of summer, you will perpetually enjoy the mildness and beauty of spring, with the delicious fruits of autumn."

When they had cast anchor a little below the city, the passengers quitting the ship, went each to their respective habitations. Noureddin gave five pieces of gold for the passage, and landed also with the Beautiful Persian. As he had never before been at Bagdad, he was wholly ignorant where to seek an abode. They walked for a considerable time by the side of the gardens which bordered the Tigris, one of which was bounded by a long and handsome wall. When they arrived at the end of this, they turned into a long well-paved street, in which they perceived the garden gate, near a most delightful fountain.

The gate, which was extremely magnificent, was locked. Before it was an

open vestibule, having a sofa on each side. "Here is a most convenient place," said Nouredin to the Beautiful Persian. "Night is coming on, and as we so lately refreshed ourselves before we left the ship, I recommend that we remain here. To-morrow morning we shall have ample time to look out for a lodging. What say you?" "You know, sir," replied the Beautiful Persian, "that I have no wish but to please you; if you desire to continue here, I shall be happy to do so." They each of them took a draught from the fountain, and then seating themselves on one of the sofas, conversed together for some time, till lulled by the agreeable murmur of the waters, they fell into a profound sleep.

The garden, which belonged to the caliph, had in the middle of it a grand pavilion, called the painted pavilion; being chiefly ornamented with pictures in the Persian style, painted by masters, whom the caliph had sent for from Persia, for the express purpose. The grand and superb saloon which this pavilion formed, was lighted by eighty windows, having each a lustre; but these lustres were never lighted up, except when the caliph was present, and the evening was so mild that not a breath of air could be perceived. They then produced a most beautiful illumination, which could be seen at some distance in the country, and in a great part of the city.

This garden was inhabited only by the person who kept it, a very aged officer, named Scheikh Ibrahim, to whom the caliph had given this post as a reward for former services. He had received, at the same time, very particular injunctions not to admit into it all persons indiscriminately; and particularly, that he would allow no one to sit or rest upon the sofas placed without the gate, which were to be constantly kept in the neatest condition; and that he would punish all whom he found offending.

This officer, who had been called out on some business, was not yet returned; but coming home before the day closed, he perceived two persons sleeping on one of the sofas, their heads covered with linen to protect them from the gnats. "So, so!" said Scheikh Ibrahim to himself, "it is thus that you disobey the commands of the caliph; but I shall teach you to respect them." He then, without any noise, opened the gate, and soon after returned with a large cane in his hand, and his sleeve tucked up. Just as he was going to strike with all his force, he restrained himself: "Scheikh Ibrahim," said he, "you are going to strike these people without considering that perhaps they are strangers, who know not where to lodge, and are ignorant of the caliph's order. It will be better first to know who they are." He then gently raised up the linen which covered their heads, and was much surprised when he saw a young man of an extremely good person, and a young woman so very beautiful. He then roused Nouredin, pulling him softly by the feet.

Nouredin immediately lifted up his head, and as soon as he saw an old man with a long white beard at his feet, he rose up on the sofa in a kneeling position, and seizing him by the hand, which he kissed: "Good father," said he, "may Heaven preserve you; what do you wish of me?" "My son," said Scheikh Ibrahim, "who are you? whence come you?" "We are strangers, who are just arrived," returned Nouredin, "and we wish to stay here till to-morrow morning." "You will be very ill off here," replied Scheikh Ibrahim; "you had better go in with me. I will furnish you with a much better place to sleep in; and the view of the garden, which is very beautiful, will delight you during the short portion of day that remains." "And is this garden yours?" said Nouredin. "To be sure it is," said Scheikh Ibrahim, smiling; "an inheritance I derived from my father. Con, you?" entreat; you will not repent seeing it."

Nouredin arose, and having expressed to the Sheikh Ibrahim his only to

he was obliged by his politeness, went with the Beautiful Persian into the garden. Scheikh Ibrahim locked the gate, and walking before, conducted them to a place whence they might see nearly at one view the disposition, grandeur, and beauty of the whole.

Noureddin had seen many very fine gardens at Balsora, but never any one comparable to this. When he had well observed everything, and had been amusing himself for some time by walking in the paths, he turned round to the old man who accompanied him, and asked him his name. As soon as he had told him, "Scheikh Ibrahim," said he, "I must confess that your garden is wonderful: may Heaven allow you many years to enjoy it. We cannot sufficiently thank you for the favour you have done us in showing us a place so extremely worth seeing; it is proper that we should in some way express our gratitude. Take then, I beg of you, these two pieces of gold, and endeavour to procure us something to eat, that we may all of us make merry together."

At the sight of the two pieces of gold, Scheikh Ibrahim, who was a great lover of that metal, could not help laughing in his sleeve. He took the money, and being without any assistant, left Noureddin and the Beautiful Persian while he went to execute the commission. "These are good people," said he to himself with great joy; "I should have done myself no small injury if I had ill-treated or driven away. With the tenth part of this money I can entertain them like princes, and the remainder I can keep for my trouble."

While Scheikh Ibrahim was gone to purchase something for supper, of which he did not forget that he was himself to partake, Noureddin and the Beautiful Persian walked about the garden till they arrived at the painted pavilion, situated in the middle of it. They stopped for some time to examine its wonderful structure, size, and loftiness; after they had gone round it, surveying it on all sides, they ascended by a grand flight of steps formed of white marble to the door of the saloon, which they found locked.

They had just descended the steps when the Scheikh returned laden with provisions. "Scheikh Ibrahim," said Noureddin, with much surprise, "did you not say that this garden belonged to you?" "I did say so, and I say it again," returned the scheikh; "but why do you ask the question?" "And is this superb pavilion," said Noureddin, "yours also?" Scheikh Ibrahim did not expect this question, and felt himself somewhat embarrassed. "If I should say it is not mine," thought he, "they will ask me immediately how it is possible that I should be master of the garden and not of the pavilion?" Having then pretended that the garden was his, he found it necessary to assert the same of the pavilion. "My son," said he, "the pavilion does not go without the garden; both of them belong to me." "Since it is yours," replied Noureddin, "and you allow us to be your guests to-night, do, I entreat you, grant us the favour of letting us see the interior of it; for to judge from its external appearance, it must be beyond measure magnificent."

Scheikh Ibrahim felt that it would not be civil in him to refuse Noureddin's request, after the pecuniary obligations he had received from him. He considered, too, that the caliph, not having sent him any notice, as he was accustomed to do, would not be there that night; it appeared, therefore, that his guests, as well as himself, might safely take their repast in the pavilion. Having then placed the provisions he had brought, upon the first step of the staircase, he went to his apartment to find the key, and, returning with a light, opened the door.

Noureddin and the Beautiful Persian entered the saloon, which they found some well-paved splendid, that they were wholly engrossed in admiring its riches and
 The sofas and ornaments, to say nothing of the pictures, were in the
 style of magnificence; and, besides the lustres which hung at every
 The gate

window, there were between the frames silver branches, each containing a wax taper. Nouredin could not behold these objects without calling to mind the splendour in which he himself had lived, and heaving a sigh.

In the mean time, Scheikh Ibrahim having brought the provisions, prepared a table upon one of the sofas; and now, everything being ready, Nouredin, the Beautiful Persian, and himself, sat down to supper. When they had finished, and had washed their hands, Nouredin opened one of the windows, and calling the Beautiful Persian: "Come hither," said he, "and admire with me the charming view, and the beauty of the garden by the light of the moon. Nothing can be more delightful." She approached, and they together enjoyed the sight, while Scheikh Ibrahim was removing the cloth.

When he had done, and was returned to his guests, Nouredin asked him if he had nothing in the way of liquor, with which he could regale them. "Would you like sherbet?" said Scheikh Ibrahim. "I have some that is exquisite; but then, you know, my son, one never drinks sherbet after supper." "That's very true," replied Nouredin; "but it is not sherbet we desire; there is, you know, another kind of liquor; I am surprised you don't understand me." "You must surely mean wine, then," said Scheikh Ibrahim. "You have guessed it exactly," replied Nouredin; "if you have any, you will oblige us much by getting a bottle; one drinks it, you know, as an agreeable amusement from supper till bed-time."

"God forbid that I should have any wine!" exclaimed the old man, "or that I should approach the place where it is! A man who, like me, has made the pilgrimage to Mecca four times, has renounced wine for the rest of his days."

"You would, however, do us a great kindness to procure us some," returned Nouredin; "and if it will not be disagreeable to you, I will teach you a method of doing so, without your entering a tavern, or even touching the vessel that contains it." "I will agree on these conditions," returned Scheikh Ibrahim; "only tell me what I am to do."

"We saw," said Nouredin, "an ass tied up at the entrance of your garden: as I conclude it to be yours, you ought to make use of it in cases of necessity. Here, take these two other pieces of gold, load your ass with his panniers, and proceed towards the first tavern, but not at all nearer than you like; give something to the first person that passes you, and beg him to go to the tavern with the ass, and procure two pitchers of wine, one to be put in each pannier, and then lead the ass back to you, after he has paid for the wine with the money which you will give him: you will then have only to drive the ass before you hither, and we ourselves will take out the pitchers from the panniers. In this way you will do nothing that can give your conscience the least offence."

The two other pieces of gold, which Scheikh Ibrahim had now received, produced a wonderful effect upon his mind. "Ah! my son," he exclaimed, when Nouredin had finished, "how well you understand things; without your assistance, I could never have imagined any possible means by which I could have procured you wine, without feeling some scruple." He left them to go about his commission, which he executed in a very short time. As soon as he returned, Nouredin went down the steps, drew the pitchers from the panniers, and carried them up into the saloon.

Scheikh Ibrahim now led back the ass to the place from whence he had taken it; when he returned, "Scheikh Ibrahim," said Nouredin to him, "we cannot sufficiently thank you for the trouble you have taken; but still there is one thing wanting." "And what," returned he, "is there I can yet do to serve you?" "We have no cups to drink out of," replied Nouredin; "and a little fruit of some sort, if you have any, would be very acceptable." "You have only to

“speak,” said Scheikh Ibrahim, “and you shall want for nothing you can desire.”

He then went down, and in a short time provided them a table, set out with the most beautiful porcelain, filled with all sorts of fruit, and with a variety of cups, both of gold and silver; and when he had asked them if they had occasion for anything more, he withdrew, though they solicited his company with much importunity.

Noureddin and the Beautiful Persian again placed themselves at the table, and began each of them to take a cup of the wine, which they found excellent. “Well, my love,” said Noureddin to the Beautiful Persian, “are we not the most fortunate people in the world, to be thus brought by accident into so delightful a place? Let us enjoy it, and endeavour to recover ourselves from the bad fare of our voyage. Can happiness be more complete than mine, you on one side of me, and good wine on the other?” They filled their cups frequently, and conversed together in the most agreeable manner, alternately amusing each other with a song.

As they had most excellent voices, and particularly the Beautiful Persian, their singing did not fail to attract Scheikh Ibrahim, who listened to them a long time with the greatest pleasure, placing himself near the top of the stairs, where he could not be seen. At length, unable to contain himself any longer, he pushed his head in at the door: “Well done, sir,” said he to Noureddin, whom he believed to be already intoxicated; “I am delighted to see you so happy.”

“Ah! scheikh,” cried Noureddin, turning that way, “you are a fine fellow, and we are much obliged to you. We dare not ask you to drink; but come in nevertheless; give us at least the honour of your company.” “Go on, go on,” replied the scheikh, “I am sufficiently pleased with hearing your charming songs.” Having said this, he disappeared.

The Beautiful Persian, perceiving that Scheikh Ibrahim retreated no further than to the top of the stairs, gave notice of it to Noureddin. “Sir,” said she, “you see what an aversion he shows to wine; I do not, however, despair of making him drink some, if you will do what I propose.” “What is that?” exclaimed Noureddin; “you have only to speak, to make me do whatever you wish.” “Prevail with him, then, merely to come in, and be of our party; when he has been here some time, pour out a cup of wine, and offer him; if he refuses, drink it yourself; feign afterwards to be asleep, and leave the rest to me.”

Noureddin was not slow in apprehending the Beautiful Persian's design. He called to Scheikh Ibrahim, who reappeared at the door. “Scheikh Ibrahim,” said he, “we are your guests, and you have entertained us in the most noble manner possible. Will you then refuse us the request we make that you will honour us with your company? We will not ask you to drink; we only solicit the pleasure of having you with us.”

The scheikh allowed himself to be persuaded. He entered, and placed himself at the edge of the sofa which was nearest the door. “You are badly seated there,” said Noureddin, “and, besides, we have not the honour of seeing you. Come forward, I entreat you, and take a seat near the lady; it will gratify her much.” “I will do whatever you desire,” returned Scheikh Ibrahim: he then approached with a smiling countenance, pleased at the idea of being near so charming a woman, and seated himself at some little distance from the Beautiful Persian. Noureddin requested her to sing, in consideration of the honour which Scheikh Ibrahim had done them, which she did in a manner that delighted him to ecstasy.

When the Beautiful Persian had finished her song, Noureddin poured out a

cup of wine, and said : " Scheikh Ibrahim, let me entreat you to drink this to our healths." " Sir," replied he, starting backward, as if even the sight of wine excited horror, " I beg of you to excuse me ; I have already told you that I have renounced wine long ago." " Since then you positively will not drink our healths," said Nouredin, " you must allow me to drink yours."

While Nouredin was drinking, the Beautiful Persian cut half an apple, which she presented to the scheikh. " You would not drink with us," said she, " but I flatter myself you will not have the same aversion to taste of this apple ; it is a most excellent one." Scheikh Ibrahim could not refuse it from so fair a hand ; he took it, making a slight inclination of his head, and began to eat it. She was saying many civil things to him on the occasion, when Nouredin, falling back on the sofa, pretended to go to sleep. The Beautiful Persian immediately advanced towards the scheikh, and speaking to him in a low voice : " Look at him," said she, " this is always his way, whenever we should enjoy ourselves together ; he has no sooner drunk a cup or two of wine than he falls asleep, and leaves me alone ; but you I hope will have the goodness to give me your company while he is sleeping there."

The Beautiful Persian took a cup, and having filled it with wine, presented it to him. " Take this," said she, " and drink my health ; I will pledge you." The scheikh made a great many difficulties, and was very earnest that she would desist from her request ; but she pressed him in so lively a manner, that, overcome by her charms and entreaties, he took the cup and drank it off.

The good old man loved wine to his heart, but was ashamed of indulging before people with whom he was not acquainted. He was in the habit, like many others, of going to taverns in private, and had not thought it necessary to take the precautions which Nouredin had recommended. Under favour of night, he had himself gone to purchase the wine of an inn-keeper of his acquaintance, and had thus saved the money which, according to Nouredin's instructions, he was to give the person whom he might employ.

While Scheikh Ibrahim, after he had taken his cup, was eating the remainder of his apple, the Beautiful Persian filled him another, which he took with much less difficulty than the former. To the third he made no objection whatever. He was going on to drink a fourth, when Nouredin, ceasing to feign himself asleep, rose up on his seat, and looking hard at the old man, burst out into a violent fit of laughter. " Ha, ha," said he, " Scheikh Ibrahim, I have caught you. You told me you had renounced wine, and that you could not bear even to see it."

The scheikh was somewhat disconcerted by this unexpected address, as appeared by the colour mounting rapidly into his cheeks ; he did not, however, permit his laughter to be spoiled. Having finished it : " Sir," said he smiling, " if what I have done is a sin, it ought not to be laid to mine, but this fair lady's charge ; how is it possible to resist so many charms ?"

The Beautiful Persian, who perfectly understood Nouredin, affected to take the part of the scheikh. " Scheikh Ibrahim," said she, " let him talk on ; do not suffer him to interrupt us ; continue to drink and enjoy yourself." Some little time after, Nouredin poured out some wine for himself, and afterwards presented some to the Beautiful Persian. When Scheikh Ibrahim saw that Nouredin gave him none, he took a cup and held it out to him : " Well," said he, " and why am I not to drink as well as you ?"

At these words Nouredin and the Beautiful Persian laughed very heartily. Nouredin filled his cup, and they continued to enjoy themselves, and to laugh and drink till midnight. About this time the Beautiful Persian bethought herself that there was only one light on the table. " Scheikh Ibrahim," said she to the good old officer, " you have allowed us only one taper, while there

are so many handsome ones about the room. Do us the favour, I beseech you, to light them that we may see a little more clearly." The scheikh, full of the freedom that wine inspires, when the head becomes a little heated; and that a conversation he was then holding with Noureddin might not be interrupted, called out to this beautiful lady, "Light them yourself; it is a much more proper office for youth like yours; but take care not to light more than five or six: that will be sufficient." The Beautiful Persian rose up, and taking a wax taper in her hand, and lighting it by that on the table, proceeded to light up the whole eighty, without at all regarding what the scheikh had told her.

Some time after, while the scheikh was conversing with the Beautiful Persian upon some other subject, Noureddin, in his turn, requested him to light up some of the lustres. Without observing that all the tapers were burning, "You must," said he, "be extremely indolent, or have weaker limbs than I have, if you cannot do them yourself. Go, then, and light them, but remember, not more than three." Instead of confining himself to this number, he lighted up the whole, and afterwards opened the fourscore windows, unobserved by the scheikh, who was earnestly engaged in conversation with the Beautiful Persian.

The caliph Haroun Alraschid was not yet retired to his chamber; he was in a hall of his palace, which fronted the Tigris, and had on one side a view of the garden and the painted pavilion. By accident he opened a window on this side, and was exceedingly surprised to see the pavilion entirely lighted up; the more, as from its great splendour he at first imagined that it was a fire in some part of the city. The grand vizier Giafar was still with him, waiting the moment when the caliph should retire, to return to his own home. The caliph called out to him in a great rage, "Come here, you careless vizier, approach this way; look at the painted pavilion, and tell me why it is lighted up, and I not there."

The grand vizier trembled exceedingly, from an apprehension that what the caliph said might be true; but he trembled much more when he approached, and found that it really was so. It was necessary, however, to find some pretence to appease him. "Commander of the Faithful," said he, "I can give your majesty no other information on the subject, except that about four or five days since, Scheikh Ibrahim came and informed me that he had an intention of holding an assembly of the ministers belonging to his mosque, in order to observe some ceremony which he was anxious to perform, under your majesty's most happy reign. I asked him in what way he expected me to serve him in the affair; upon which he entreated me to obtain permission of your majesty to hold the meeting and perform the ceremony in the pavilion. I dismissed him, by saying that he might do what he wished, and that I would not fail to speak to your majesty on the subject; and I entreat your pardon for having, through forgetfulness, neglected to do so. Scheikh Ibrahim, it should seem," continued he, "has chosen this day for the ceremony, and has, without doubt, in the course of entertaining the ministers, made this illumination for their pleasure."

"Giafar," replied the caliph, in a tone that showed he was somewhat appeased, "it appears from your own account, that you have committed three most unpardonable faults: first, in having given permission to Scheikh Ibrahim to perform this ceremony in the pavilion,—the mere keeper of a garden is not an officer of sufficient consideration to be allowed so great an honour; secondly, in having neglected to speak to me on the subject; and thirdly, in not having discovered the real object of this good old man. I am persuaded that he had no other view in his application to you than to see if he could obtain some gratuity to assist him in his undertaking. You had not the penetration to find it out, and I think him not to blame, to avenge himself of your omission by the greater expense of this illumination."

The grand vizier, delighted to see the caliph treat the affair in this pleasant way, readily took upon himself the faults with which he had been reproached, and freely confessed that he was very wrong in not having presented Scheikh Ibrahim with a few pieces of gold. "Since that is the case," added the caliph, smiling, "it is proper you should be punished for your faults; your punishment, however, will not be very severe; it shall be to pass, as I also intend to do, the remainder of this night with these good people, whom I should much like to see. While, therefore, I go and put on the dress of a citizen, do you and Mesrour disguise yourselves in the same manner, and then accompany me." The grand vizier humbly represented to him that it was very late, and the company would probably be gone before his majesty could arrive; but the caliph replied that he was determined to go. As there was not a shadow of truth in what the vizier had been saying, he felt extremely embarrassed at this resolution of the caliph; but it was necessary to obey, and not reply.

The caliph then sallied out from his palace in the disguise of a citizen, accompanied by the grand vizier Giasar, and Mesrour, the chief of the eunuchs: he proceeded through the streets of Bagdad until he arrived at the garden, the gate of which he found open. This was owing to the negligence of Scheikh Ibrahim, who had forgotten to lock it when he returned from purchasing the wine. The caliph was much offended at it: "Giasar," said he to the grand vizier, "what do you say to the gate's being open at this hour. Is it possible that Scheikh Ibrahim should make it a custom to leave it open thus all night? I would rather hope that the neglect has been occasioned by the hurry and confusion arising from the entertainment."

The caliph entered the garden. When he was arrived at the pavilion, being unwilling to go up into the saloon before he knew what was going forward there, he consulted with the grand vizier about climbing some one of the nearest trees, in order to make the discovery he wished. In looking about towards the door of the saloon, the grand vizier perceived that it was not entirely closed, of which he informed his master. Scheikh Ibrahim had left it thus, when he had been persuaded to enter the room and join the party of Nouredin and the Beautiful Persian.

The caliph upon this gave up his first design, and ascended softly, without noise, to the door of the saloon, which he found so far open that he was able to see those that were in the room without being himself observed. His surprise was great indeed when he saw a lady of incomparable beauty and an extremely handsome young man sitting at table, together with Scheikh Ibrahim, who was holding a cup in his hand, and addressing the Beautiful Persian: "My charming lady, a good companion will never continue drinking all the evening without mixing music with his wine: do me the honour to listen to me, and I will sing you a very pleasant song."

He then began to sing, at which the caliph was exceedingly astonished, as he had been ignorant, till this moment, that Scheikh Ibrahim ever indulged in wine; and had always believed him the grave, sober man he appeared to be. He now withdrew from the door, as cautiously as he had approached, and returned to the grand vizier, who was upon the staircase a few steps below. "Come up, and see if the persons who are here are ministers of the mosque, as you wished me to believe."

From the tone with which the caliph pronounced these words, the grand vizier knew too well that affairs were going on very badly for him. He went up, and looking through the opening of the door, trembled with alarm when he saw three persons in the situation and state of those before him. He returned to the caliph utterly confused, and wholly at a loss what to say. "What impudence is this?" said the caliph, "that these people should presume to come

and divert themselves in my garden and pavilion ; and that Scheikh Ibrahim should allow it, and even partake of their diversion ! I do not, however, believe that one can easily see a young man and young woman better made and better matched ; before, therefore, I give way to my indignation, I wish to learn who they are, and for what purpose they are here." Here turned to the door to observe them again, and the vizier who followed remained behind him. They both heard what the scheikh was saying to the Beautiful Persian : " My lovely lady, is there anything you can desire to render our pleasure this evening more complete." " It appears to me," she replied, " that everything would be perfect if there were an instrument, on which I could play a little. If you have one, do me the favour to get it for me." " Madam," replied the scheikh, " can you play on the lute ?" " Bring me one," she said, " and you shall hear."

Without going far from his place, Scheikh Ibrahim took a lute out of a closet, and presented it to the Beautiful Persian, who began to put it in tune. The caliph, in the mean time, turned round to the grand vizier : " *Giafar*," said he, " the young lady is going to play upon the lute. If she plays well, I will pardon her, and also the young man for her sake ; but with respect to you, you shall certainly be hanged." " Commander of the Faithful," replied the grand vizier, " I pray to God, then, she may play ill." " Why so ?" said the caliph. " The more of us there are to suffer," replied the grand vizier, " the better we shall console ourselves, that we die in a good and pleasant party." The caliph, who was fond of a jest, laughed at the repartee ; while turning round toward the opening of the door, he applied his ear to hear the Beautiful Persian play.

She was already preluding in such a way, that the caliph immediately perceived, by her manner of touching it, that she was a perfect mistress of the instrument. She afterwards sang an air, accompanying her voice, which was excellent, on the lute, and performed it with so much skill, and in so exquisite a style, that the caliph was quite charmed.

As soon as she had finished her song, the caliph descended the stairs, the vizier following him. When he was at the bottom, " On my life," said he, " I have never heard so good a voice, nor a better player on the lute. Isaac, whom I believed the best in the world, is much inferior to her. I am so well satisfied, that I wish to go in and hear her play before me : but the difficulty is to find out in what way I can effect it."

" Commander of the Faithful," replied the vizier, " if you were to enter, and Scheikh Ibrahim were to know you, he would infallibly die with terror." " This is what occasions my embarrassment," returned the caliph ; " I should be sorry to be the cause of the old man's death, after he has served me so many years. A thought comes into my mind which may answer : do you stay here with Mesrour, and wait in the first walk till I come back."

The vicinity of the Tigris had given the caliph an opportunity of forming in his garden, by means of a channel he had made underground, a very handsome piece of water, which served as a refuge for many of the finest fish of the river. With this the fishermen were well acquainted, and had often wished to have the liberty of fishing there ; but the caliph had expressly forbidden Scheikh Ibrahim to permit any one. Nevertheless, that very night a fisherman, who was passing the garden gate, which the caliph had left open as he found it, had taken advantage of the opportunity, and stealing into the garden, had proceeded as far as the piece of water.

He had thrown in his nets, and was just going to take them up, when the caliph, who, after the negligence of Scheikh Ibrahim, had suspected what might happen, and resolved to avail himself of the circumstance, came to the

place. Notwithstanding his disguise, the fisherman knew him immediately, and, throwing himself at his feet, entreated his pardon, pleading the excuse of poverty. "Rise, and fear nothing," said the caliph; "only take up your nets, and let me see what fish you have got."

The fisherman, taking courage, readily performed what the caliph desired, and drew up five or six very fine fish, of which the caliph took the two largest, and fastened them together by means of a twig passed through their gills and head. He then said to the fisherman, "Give me your clothes and take mine." The exchange was made in a few moments, and the caliph was entirely fitted out in the style of a fisherman from head to foot. He then sent the man away, "Take up your nets," said he, "and go about your business."

When the fisherman was gone, perfectly content with his good fortune, the caliph took the two fish in his hand, and returned to look for the grand vizier Giafar and Mesrour. He stopped when he approached the grand vizier, who not knowing him, angrily cried out, "What do you want, fellow? Go your ways." The caliph upon this laughed heartily, when the grand vizier recollected him. "Commander of the Faithful," he exclaimed, "is it possible it can be you? I did not know you in the least, and I beg a thousand pardons for my rudeness. You may immediately enter the saloon, without the smallest fear that Scheikh Ibrahim will discover you." "Do you then and Mesrour stay here," said he, "while I go and perform my part."

The caliph ascended the stairs of the saloon, and knocked at the door. Nouredin, who first heard him, informed Scheikh Ibrahim of it, who inquired who was there? The caliph opened the door, and advancing one step into the saloon, in order that he might be seen, "Scheikh Ibrahim," said he, "I am Kerim, the fisherman. I was told you were entertaining your friends, and, as I have this moment caught two very fine fish, I come to ask you if you would like to have them."

Nouredin and the Beautiful Persian were delighted to hear of fish. "Scheikh Ibrahim," said the Beautiful Persian to him immediately, "pray do us the favour to make him come in, that we may see his fish." The scheikh, no longer in a state to think of asking this pretended fisherman how or whence he came, was wholly devoted to the Beautiful Persian; turning, therefore, his head towards the door, but with great difficulty from the quantity of wine he had drunk, with a stammering voice he addressed the caliph, whom he took for a fisherman. "Come hither," said he, "my fine thief of the night, come hither, and let me see you."

The caliph advanced, counterfeiting perfectly well the manners of a fisherman, and presented his two fish. "These are really very fine," said the Beautiful Persian, "and I should like to partake of them extremely if they were dressed and served up." "The lady is right," says Scheikh Ibrahim. "What can we do with your fish in this state. Go and get them ready yourself, and bring them to us; you will find everything you want in my kitchen."

The caliph returned to find the grand vizier Giafar. "I have been extremely well received," said he, "but they want me to dress these fish." "I will go and get them ready," replied the grand vizier; "it will be done in an instant." "I am so desirous," returned the caliph, "to accomplish my whole purpose myself, that I will even take the trouble of doing it. Since I have acted the fisherman so well, I can surely personate the cook; in my youth, I often attended the kitchen, and did not acquit myself badly." He then went towards Scheikh Ibrahim's apartment, and was followed by the grand vizier and Mesrour.

They all three set to work, and though the kitchen was none of the largest, yet, as it contained everything necessary, the fish was soon ready. The caliph

carried up the dish, and, in serving it, placed before each of them a lemon, that they might take it if they wished. They ate with much appetite, particularly Noureddin and the Beautiful Persian, and the caliph remained standing before them.

When they had finished, Noureddin looked up at the caliph. "Fisherman," said he, "it is impossible to eat better fish; you have done us the greatest favour in the world." At the same time, putting his hand into his bosom, and drawing out his purse, in which there were still remaining thirty pieces of gold, the remainder of the forty which Sangiar, the officer of the king of Balsora, had given him before his departure: "Take it," said he; "if I had more I would give it you. Had I known you before I expended my fortune, I would have placed you beyond the reach of poverty; receive this, however, with as good will as if the present were more considerable."

The caliph took the purse, and thanked Noureddin. Having perceived that it contained gold, "Sir," said he, "I cannot sufficiently acknowledge your generosity. I am particularly fortunate to have dealings with such noble gentlemen as you; but before I go away, I have one request to make, which I entreat you to grant. I see a lute there, from which I conclude that the lady plays; if you could prevail on her to favour me with a single tune, I should return home the most contented creature in the world, for it is an instrument I am passionately fond of."

"Beautiful Persian," said Noureddin, addressing himself to her, "permit me to request this favour of you, which I hope you will not refuse." She took the lute, and having tuned it, she sang and played an air that charmed the caliph. When this was finished, she continued to play without singing, and performed with so much taste and expression, that he was delighted to ecstasy. When the Beautiful Persian had done playing, "Ah," cried the caliph, "what a voice! what a hand! what execution! Was there ever such a singer? ever such a player? No one ever saw or heard her equal."

Noureddin, accustomed to give whatever belonged to him to those that commended it, "Fisherman," said he, "I see clearly that you understand the matter; since she pleases you so much, she is yours—I make you a present of her." At the same time he got up, and taking his robe, which he had put off, was about to depart and leave the caliph, whom he knew only as a fisherman, in possession of the Beautiful Persian.

The Beautiful Persian, exceedingly astonished at the liberality of Noureddin, stopped him. "Sir," said she, looking at him tenderly, "where do you mean to go? Resume your place, I beseech you, and listen to what I am going to sing and play. He did as she desired him. Then touching the lute, and continuing to look upon him, her eyes bathed in tears, she sung some verses, made at the instant, in which she keenly upbraided him with his want of affection, since he could so readily, and even so cruelly abandon her to Kerim. She wished to express her sentiments by these means to Noureddin, without explaining herself further to a fisherman such as Kerim, whom she knew not any more than himself to be the caliph. When she had finished, she laid down her lute by her side, and put a handkerchief to her face to conceal the tears she was unable to restrain.

Noureddin answered not a word to her reproaches, and seemed to express by his silence that he did not repent the donation he had made. But the caliph, surprised at what he had heard, said to him, "From what I see, sir, this beautiful, rare, and accomplished lady, whom you have just presented to me with so much generosity, is a slave, and you her master." "It is just so, Kerim," replied Noureddin; "and you would be more astonished than you appear at present, if I were to relate to you all the misfortunes I have

sustained on her account." "Oh ! pray sir," returned the caliph, always carefully preserving his assumed character, "be so kind as to make me acquainted with your history."

Noureddin, who had just been conferring on him favours of much greater importance, was unwilling to refuse the fisherman, as he believed him to be, this further instance of his good will. He recounted to him his whole history, beginning with the purchase of the Beautiful Persian, made by the vizier, his father, for the king of Balsora, and omitted nothing of what he had done or suffered, from that time to his arrival at Bagdad, and even to the very moment he was speaking.

Noureddin had no sooner finished, than the caliph said to him, "Where do you intend to go now?" "Where am I going?" replied he; "why, where Heaven shall direct me." "If you will trust to me," replied the caliph, "you will go no further: it is, on the contrary, necessary that you should return to Balsora. I will write you a short note, which you shall give the king from me. You will find, after he has read it, he will receive you very graciously, and that no one will say anything against you."

"Kerim," replied Noureddin, "what you say to me is very extraordinary: who ever heard of a fisherman like you corresponding with a king?" "This ought not to surprise you," resumed the caliph; "we pursued our studies together under the same masters, and have always been the best friends in the world. It is true, fortune has not equally favoured us; him she has made a king, and me a fisherman, but this inequality has not lessened our friendship. He has often wished to take me out of my present condition, and has urged it with all the kindness imaginable. I am satisfied, however, in the belief that he will refuse nothing I may ask for the good of my friends. Leave the affair to me, and you shall see the consequence."

Noureddin consented to do what the caliph desired; and as there was everything in the saloon necessary for writing, the caliph wrote the following letter to the king of Balsora; on the top of which, near the edge of the paper, he added in very small characters, "In the name of the most merciful God;" an established form to express that he required the most implicit obedience.

"The Caliph Haroun Alraschid to the King of Balsora."

"Haroun Alraschid, son of Mahdi, sends this letter to Mahomed Zinebi, his cousin. As soon as Noureddin, son of the late vizier Khacan, and the bearer of this letter, shall have delivered it, and you have read its contents, at that very instant strip yourself of the royal mantle, put it upon his shoulders, and resign to him your crown. Herein fail not. Farewell."

The caliph folded up and sealed the letter, without informing Noureddin of its contents. "Take it," said he; "go and embark without delay; the vessel will be off very soon, as it departs every day about this hour; you may sleep after you are on board." Noureddin took the letter, and set off with only the little money he had in his pocket at the time when Sangiar gave him his purse; and the Beautiful Persian, inconsolable at his departure, withdrew to a sofa, where she resigned herself to the most poignant grief.

Scarcely had Noureddin left the saloon when Scheikh Ibrahim, who had been silent during the whole transaction, looked hard at the caliph, whom he still believed to be the fisherman Kerim: "Hark ye, Kerim," said he, "you came here to bring two fish, which at most were not worth more than twenty pieces of copper, and for them you have obtained a purse and a slave. Do you imagine that you shall have all this to yourself? I declare that I will have half the profits of the slave: and with respect to the purse, show me what it

contains · if it be silver you shall take one piece of it for yourself, if gold, I will take the whole, and give you some pieces of copper I have about me."

"In order to make what follows sufficiently intelligible" (said Scheherazade, here interrupting her narration), "it is necessary to remark that the caliph, previous to his carrying the fish to the saloon, had ordered the grand vizier to repair with all diligence to the palace, and bring back with him a dress, and four of those servants that attended his person, and to wait on the other side of the pavilion till he should strike one of the windows with his hands. The grand vizier had acquitted himself of this commission, and he, Mesour, and the four servants were waiting at the place appointed till the signal should be given. I now return to my story," added the sultana.

The caliph, still in the character of a fisherman, boldly replied "Scheikh Ibrahim, what there may be in the purse I know not · Is it gold or silver, I will share it with you with all my heart · but with respect to the slave, I will keep her to myself · If you are unwilling to agree to these conditions, you shall have nothing."

Scheikh Ibrahim, furious with rage at this insolence, as he deemed it, of a fisherman, snatched up one of the porcelain dishes that was upon the table, and threw it at the caliph's head. The caliph found no great difficulty in avoiding a dish thrown by a drunken man, it struck the wall, and broke into a thousand pieces. Scheikh Ibrahim, more angry than before from having missed his aim, took the candle which was upon the table, rose staggering from his seat, and went down the back stairs to find a cane.

The caliph profited by this interval and striking one of the windows with his hands, the grand vizier, Mesour, and the four servants were with him in an instant. The servants had very soon taken off the fisherman's dress, and put on that they had brought. They had not, however, quite finished, and were still employed about the caliph, who was seated on the throne which he had in the saloon, when Scheikh Ibrahim, stimulated by interest, re-entered the room, with a large cane in his hand, with which he promised himself to give the pretended fisherman a good beating. Instead of finding the object of his wrath, he could perceive only his clothes lying in the middle of the saloon, while he beheld the caliph seated on his throne, with the grand vizier and Mesour at his side. He started at the sight, scarcely knowing whether he was awake or asleep. The caliph laughed at his surprise. "Scheikh Ibrahim," said he, "what do you want? Who are you looking for?"

The scheikh, who could no longer doubt but it was the caliph who had personated Kerim, threw himself immediately at his feet, his face and long beard touching the ground. "Commander of the Faithful," he cried, "your vile slave hath offended you, he implores your mercy, he entreats your forgiveness." As the attendants had now finished dressing him, he said, while he descended from his throne, "Rise, I pardon you."

The caliph addressed himself afterwards to the Beautiful Persian, who had suspended her grief as soon as she had learned that the garden and pavilion belonged to this prince, and not to Scheikh Ibrahim, as the latter had pretended, and that it was he himself who had been dressed as a fisherman. "Beautiful Persian," said he, "rise, and follow me. After what you have witnessed, you need not be informed who I am, and that I am not of a rank to take advantage of the present which, with a generosity never equalled, Nouredin has made me of your person. I have sent him to ascend the throne of Balsora, and you shall follow him and partake of his honours, as soon as I shall have forwarded the despatches necessary for his full establishment. In the mean time, I will

order you an apartment in my palace, where you shall be treated with all the respect you so well deserve."

These assurances of the caliph reanimated the hopes of the Beautiful Persian, by enabling her to look for consolation from that quarter alone whence she was capable of receiving it. She was now fully repaid for her affliction by the joy she felt that Noureddin, whom she passionately loved, was about to be raised to so high a dignity. The caliph did not fail to keep his word with her; he even recommended her to the care of his wife Zobeidè, having previously informed her of the high proof of his esteem which he had been conferring on Noureddin.

The return of Noureddin to Balsora was fortunate, although sooner by some days than for his sake was to be wished. On his arrival he saw neither relation nor friend, but went immediately to the palace of the king, who was then giving audience. He pierced through the crowd, holding the letter up in his hand; every one gave way, and he presented it to the king, who took it, opened, and read it, showing his emotion by the frequent changes in his countenance. He kissed it thrice, and was going to execute the order, when it occurred to him to show the letter to the vizier Saouy, the mortal enemy of Noureddin.

Saouy, who had perceived Noureddin, and was conjecturing in his own mind with much anxiety what possible design he could have, was not, after he had read the letter, less surprised than the king himself. Feeling equally interested in its contents, he discovered in a moment a way to elude them. Pretending not to have read the letter perfectly, and apparently to peruse it a second time, he turned himself a little on one side, as if to take advantage of the light. Then, without being perceived by any one, and so that the effect could not be seen but on a very near examination, he tore off very dexterously the top of the letter, containing the words which expressed the caliph's injunction of immediate and implicit obedience, conveyed it to his mouth, and swallowed it.

After this perfidious conduct, Saouy turned round to the king, and giving him the letter: "Well, sire," said he, in a very low voice, "what is your majesty's intention?" "To do as the caliph commands me," answered the king. "Be on your guard, sire," returned the wicked vizier; "the writing is indeed the caliph's, but the important form is wanting." The king had before observed it, but in the perturbation he was in, he imagined he might have been deceived, since it was not now to be seen.

"Sire," continued the vizier, "it cannot be doubted that the caliph has given Noureddin this letter in consequence of the complaints he has been urging against your majesty and me, merely to get rid of his importunity; for it is not to be imagined that you are to execute what it contains. It is, moreover, to be considered, that no express has been sent with the patent, without which the letter is useless. A king like your majesty is not to be deposed without some formality; another claimant may arrive even with a forged letter; this practice, sire, never has been, nor ever can be allowed. Your majesty may depend upon what I say, and I will take upon myself the whole responsibility for what may be the consequence."

The king allowed himself to be persuaded, and gave up Noureddin entirely to the discretion of the vizier Saouy, who with the aid of a considerable escort, had him conducted to his own house. As soon as he arrived there, he received the bastinado till he was to all appearance dead; and in this condition was conveyed to a prison, where he was confined in the darkest and deepest cell, with strict orders to the keeper to give him nothing but bread and water.

When Noureddin, half dead from the blows he had received, began to recover his senses, and saw the dismal place he was in, he gave way to the most bitter

lamentations, deploring his unhappy fate. "Ah ! fisherman," cried he, "how hast thou deceived me ; and how ready was I to believe thee ? could I expect so cruel a return for the benefits I had bestowed on thee ? God bless thee, nevertheless : I can never believe that thy intention was so wicked, and I will summon patience for the end of my woes."

The unhappy Noureddin remained six whole days in this forlorn state ; not, indeed, forgotten by the vizier : this revengeful minister had resolved to take away his life in the most public and disgraceful manner, but durst not undertake it on his own authority. In order to succeed in his base designs, he loaded a number of his own slaves with rich presents, and placing himself at their head, went before the king : "Sire," said he, with the deepest malice, "see the present which the new king entreats your majesty to accept on his accession to the crown."

The king fully comprehended what Saouy wished to convey to him. "What !" said he, "is that wretch still living ? I thought you had taken care to have him disposed of." "Sire," replied Saouy, "it is not in my department to order the execution of any one ; that power belongs to your majesty." "Go, then," replied he, "order his head off immediately ; I give you full permission." "Sire," said Saouy, "I am infinitely obliged to your majesty for the justice you do me, but as Noureddin gave me the affront with which your majesty is acquainted, in so public a manner, I request the favour that you will permit the sentence to be executed before the palace, and that the criers may go and proclaim it in all parts of the city. As all were witnesses of the indignity I received, I wish all may witness the reparation." The king granted his request ; while the criers in performing their duty occasioned a general sadness through the whole city. The recollection still fresh in their minds of the father's virtues, made them learn with indignation that the son was going to be ignominiously sacrificed at the solicitation, and through the revengeful malice of the vizier Saouy.

Saouy went to the prison in person, accompanied with twenty of his slaves, ministers of his cruelty. They led away Noureddin, and obliged him to mount an ill-looking horse, without a saddle. As soon as Noureddin saw himself delivered into the hands of his enemy : "You are now triumphant," said he, "and glorying in the abuse of your power ; but I have confidence in these words contained in one of our books : You judge unjustly, and in a short time you will yourself be judged." The vizier was, in truth, exulting in his heart : "What ! insolent wretch," returned he, "dare you still insult me ? However, I pardon you ; I care not what happens to me, if I have the pleasure of seeing your head taken off in the sight of all Balsora. Let me remind you of what another of our books says : Who regards dying the day after the death of his enemy ?"

This implacable minister being now surrounded by one part of his slaves in arms, ordered Noureddin to be conducted before him by the rest, and they set off towards the palace. The people were on the point of falling upon Saouy, and would certainly have stoned him if any one had set the example. When he had led Noureddin to the open space before the palace, opposite to the king's apartment, he left him in the hands of the executioner, and went immediately to the king, who was already in his cabinet, eager to feast his eyes with the bloody-spectacle which was preparing.

The king's guard, and the slaves of the vizier Saouy, who formed a large circle about Noureddin, had great difficulty to restrain the populace, who made all possible efforts, though without success, to force them and bear him away. The executioner now approached him : "Sir," said he, "I entreat you to pardon me the part I have in your death. I am only a slave, and cannot avoid

doing my duty. If there be nothing more that you have occasion for, have the goodness to prepare yourself; the king is going to command me to strike."

"In this dreadful moment, will no charitable person," said the disconsolate Nouredin, turning his head to the right and left, "bring me a drop of water to quench my thirst?" They instantly got some in a cup for him, and handed it towards him. The vizier Saouy perceiving their delay, cried out to the executioner from the window of the king's cabinet: "Strike; what do you stop for?" These barbarous and inhuman words excited such universal indignation, that the whole place resounded with the most lively imprecations against the minister; while the king, naturally jealous of his authority, by no means approved this boldness in his presence, as evidently appeared from his immediately crying out to desire them to stop. He had, indeed, another reason for doing so; at this very moment, directing his eyes towards a wide street before him, which led to the place of execution, he perceived in the middle of it a troop of horsemen, who were approaching full speed. "Vizier," said he immediately to Saouy, "look, what is that?" Saouy, who suspected what it might be, was earnest with the king to give the signal to the executioner. "No," replied the king; "I wish to know first who these horsemen are?" It was the grand vizier Giafar, with his suite, who was come from Bagdad by the order of the caliph.

To explain the occasion of this minister's arrival at Balsora, it is necessary to observe, that after the departure of Nouredin with the caliph's letter, the caliph forgot, not only the next day, but for some days after, to send an express with the patent, as he had mentioned to the Beautiful Persian. Being soon after in the inner palace, which belonged to his women, passing one of the apartments, his attention was caught by a very fine voice. He stopped, and had no sooner heard some words which expressed grief at absence, than he demanded of an officer of eunuchs who followed him, who the lady was that lived in that apartment. The officer told him it was the slave belonging to the young lord whom he had sent to Balsora to be king in the room of Mohammed Zinebi.

"Ah! poor Nouredin, son of Khacan," cried the caliph, "I had indeed forgotten thee! make haste," he added, "and desire them to send Giafar to me immediately." The minister arrived. "Giafar," said the caliph, "I have forgotten to send the patent, which was necessary to confirm Nouredin king of Balsora. There is no time now to prepare one: do you, therefore, use the utmost speed, and with some of your servants repair to Balsora with all possible diligence. If Nouredin no longer lives, and they have been the cause of his death, order the vizier Saouy to be hanged. If he is still alive, bring him hither, with the king and the vizier."

The grand vizier Giafar made no delay, but mounting his horse immediately, departed with a considerable number of the officers of his house. He arrived at Balsora at the time and in the manner already mentioned. As soon as he appeared at the place of execution, every one gave way to make room for him, crying out, "A pardon for Nouredin." He proceeded with his whole train to enter the palace, not alighting from his horse till he arrived at the foot of the stairs.

The king of Balsora recollected the prime minister of the caliph, and going out to meet him, received him at the entrance of his apartment. The grand vizier desired to know if Nouredin were yet alive, and demanded, if he were, that he might be immediately sent for. The king answered in the affirmative, and ordered him to be brought before them. He soon made his appearance, and like a prisoner, but was immediately, by desire of the grand vizier, set at liberty, who further commanded that the cords taken from Nouredin should be put on Saouy.

The grand vizier made a very short stay at Balsora, which he left the next day; and according to the order he had received, took with him Saouy, the king of Balsora, and Nouredin, whom, on his arrival at Bagdad, he presented to the caliph. When he proceeded to give an account of his journey, and particularly of the state in which he found Nouredin, and of the manner in which he had been treated, through the counsel and animosity of Saouy, the caliph, extremely incensed at this conduct, proposed that Nouredin should himself cut off the vizier's head. "Commander of the Faithful," replied Nouredin, "whatever injury this wicked man may have done me, or have attempted to do my late father, I should esteem myself the most infamous of men, were I to stain my hands with his blood." The caliph, well pleased with Nouredin's generosity, ordered the common executioner to perform this act of justice.

The caliph was desirous of sending Nouredin back to Balsora to reign there, but the latter humbly solicited to decline the honour. "Commander of the Faithful," said he, "the city of Balsora is, and ever will be, after what has happened to me there, so much my aversion, that I venture to entreat your majesty to indulge me in the observance of an oath I have taken, never to return there as long as I live. I wish to place my whole glory in the performance of such services as may not remove me from your majesty's person, if you will grant me so great an honour." The caliph placed him in the number of those courtiers with whom he was most intimate, restored to him the Beautiful Persian, and bestowed on him so plentiful a fortune, that they lived together during the rest of their lives in the enjoyment of all the happiness they could desire.

With regard to the king of Balsora, the caliph having made him perfectly sensible how much it was his duty and interest to be very circumspect in the choice of his viziers, sent him back to his kingdom.

THE HISTORY OF BEDER, PRINCE OF PERSIA, AND OF GIAUHARE, PRINCESS OF THE KINGDOM OF SAMANDAL.

PERSIA is a part of the world of so great an extent, that its ancient monarchs did not assume without reason the lofty title of king of kings. Each province which it contains, to say nothing of the various kingdoms that had been added by conquest, was governed by its own sovereign, who not only paid a large tribute to the supreme prince, but was subject to his authority, in the same manner as the governors of other kingdoms are to the authority of their respective monarchs.

One of these mighty princes, who had begun his reign by very fortunate and extensive conquests, continued to govern for many years with a happiness and tranquillity which rendered him the most contented of sovereigns. There was only one thing in which he esteemed himself unfortunate: he was far advanced in years, and not one of all his wives had given a prince to succeed to the throne after his death. He had, however, more than a hundred women, all separately lodged in the most magnificent apartments, with female slaves to wait upon, and eunuchs to guard them. But notwithstanding all his solicitude to render them happy, and even to anticipate their desires, not one of them fulfilled his anxious expectation. Women were brought from the most distant countries to him, for whom he was not content to pay merely the price demanded, but heaped the most abundant honours and benefits upon the merchants, to induce them to bring others, in the hope that one of them, at least, would bear him a son. There were no good actions he omitted to perform, in order to mitigate the severity of Heaven. He gave considerable alms to the poor, and large

donations to the holy men of his religion, instituting moreover, for their benefit, new foundations, with a magnificence truly royal, in order to obtain by their prayers what he so ardently desired.

According to the constant usage of the kings, his predecessors, during their residence in the capital, he was accustomed to hold every day an assembly of his courtiers, to which were added the ambassadors and foreigners of distinction, who attended his court. The conversation on these occasions did not usually confine itself to business of state, but turned upon the sciences, history, literature, poetry; and, indeed, embraced every topic which could agreeably interest the mind. On one of these days a eunuch came to inform him, that a merchant who had just arrived from a very remote country with a slave that he had bought, requested permission to present her before his majesty: "Desire him to enter and take a seat," said the king; "I will speak to him as soon as the assembly is over." The merchant was in consequence introduced, and placed so advantageously, that he was able not only to see the king perfectly, but to hear him converse familiarly with those immediately about his person.

It was the custom of the king to treat after this manner all strangers who had occasion to speak to him; and with this benevolent intention, that being accustomed to his presence, and witnessing the familiarity and kindness he used to those about him, they might obtain confidence to address him, and not suffer themselves to be awed by the state and grandeur with which he was surrounded; which was indeed sufficient to repress all freedom of speech, in persons unused to such magnificence. He observed a similar conduct to ambassadors; he first partook of their repasts, made inquiries after their health, their journey, and the peculiarities of their country; and when, by these means, he had given them sufficient confidence to sustain an official interview, he appointed a day of audience.

When the assembly was finished, and all but the merchant had retired, he prostrated himself before the throne, his face to the earth, praying for the accomplishment of all his majesty's desires. As soon as he had raised himself from this attitude of submission, the king asked him if it were he that had brought with him the slave of whom he had been informed, and if she were handsome.

"Sire," replied the merchant, "your majesty has, I doubt not, many beautiful slaves, as you have them sought for with so much care in every part of the world; but I can assure you, without the least apprehension of setting too high a value upon her whom I have to dispose of, that you have never seen one that can be compared with her, either in point of beauty, figure, captivating manners, or the various accomplishments of which she is mistress." "Where is she?" replied the king. "Let her be brought to me." "Sire," answered the merchant, "I left her in charge with an officer belonging to your eunuchs. Your majesty may, if you please, command her appearance instantly."

The slave was introduced. The king immediately on seeing her, became charmed with her fine figure and graceful manner. He then entered his cabinet, whither the merchant and some of the attendant eunuchs followed him. The slave had on a veil of red satin, worked with gold, which concealed her face; on the merchant's removing it, the king of Persia beheld a lady who surpassed in beauty all he then possessed, or had ever seen. He instantly became passionately in love with her, and inquired of the merchant the price he fixed upon her.

"Sire," replied the merchant, "I gave to the person of whom I purchased her a thousand pieces of gold, and I calculate that I have expended an equal sum in the three years that I have been on a journey to your court. It does not become me to mention a price to so great a prince; I entreat,

if it be agreeable to your majesty, to accept of her." "I am much obliged to you," returned the king, "but it is not my custom to receive presents from merchants, who come from so great a distance with the intention of serving me. I shall give orders that you may receive ten thousand pieces of gold. Will that satisfy you?"

"Sire," replied the merchant, "I should have been extremely happy if your majesty had deigned to accept her without rewarding me; but I presume not to refuse your liberal recompense; nor shall I fail to proclaim your generosity in my own country, and in whatever place I may chance to travel." The sum was paid to the merchant; but before he withdrew from the king's presence, he was clothed by his majesty's order in a robe of gold brocade.

The beautiful slave was, by desire of the king, lodged in the most magnificent apartment of the palace, that excepted which was appropriated to the royal use. He appointed a great many matrons and other female slaves to wait upon her, whom he ordered to conduct her to the bath, and to dress her in the most magnificent habit they could possibly obtain. They were instructed also to procure the most beautiful pearl necklaces, and diamonds, and other precious stones of the highest value, in order that she herself might choose such as she most approved.

The matrons, her attendants, who had no other view than to please the king, were themselves struck with admiration, when they beheld such extraordinary beauty. Being perfectly skilled in their business: "Sire," said they, "if your majesty will have patience to grant us only three days, we engage so much to improve, in the course of that time, the lady's appearance, that you shall scarcely know her again." The king, though very unwilling to be so long deprived of the pleasure of her society, granted their request. "I agree," said he, "on condition that you punctually keep your promise."

The capital of the king of Persia was situated on an island, and his palace, which was extremely superb, was built on its shore. The apartment of the king, and also that of the beautiful slave, situated near the king's, commanded a view of the sea, which rolled its majestic waves to the foot of the walls.

At the end of three days the beautiful slave, most magnificently adorned, was sitting upon a sofa alone in her chamber, resting her arm on one of the windows, which opened towards the sea, when the king, informed that she was prepared to receive him, entered the room. Her attention being drawn by a footstep different from that of her female attendants, she immediately turned her head to see who it was that approached her. On perceiving the king she testified not the least surprise, nor did she rise from her seat to receive him with any marks of courtesy, but, as if he were a person the most indifferent to her, she continued in the same posture as before.

The king of Persia was exceedingly astonished to see a slave of so much beauty and of such graceful deportment, who appeared to know so little of the customs of the world. He attributed this defect to the bad education she had received, and to the little care which had been taken to instruct her in the rules of good manners. He advanced towards her as far as the window, when, notwithstanding the cold careless manner in which she had just received him, she did not prevent him from viewing, admiring, caressing, and even embracing her as much as he wished.

In the midst of these delights, the monarch paused a moment to look at her. "My dearest love, my charming, my enchanting creature," exclaimed he, with enthusiasm, "tell me, I entreat, from whence you come? Who and where are those happy parents, who have given to the world so astonishing a proof of perfection as appears in you? How I love, and will ever love you! Never have I felt for any woman what I feel for you; although I have seen, and con-

tinue every day to see great numbers of your sex, I have never beheld such a blaze of charms, charms which make me entirely, devotedly yours. My dearest love," he added, "will you not answer me? Will you not deign to afford some testimony that you are sensible to the many proofs I give you of my excessive love. You do not even turn your eyes to allow mine the pleasure of meeting them, and of convincing you that it is impossible to feel more affection than I feel for you. Why do you continue a silence that chills my soul? Why do you appear in so serious, or rather so melancholy a state, which causes me so much affliction? Do you lament the loss of country, of parents, or of friends? Cannot a king of Persia, who loves, who adores you, give you consolation, and supply the place of everything else that the world affords.

Whatever protestations of love the king of Persia could make, and whatever he could say to induce her to speak, the slave still preserved the same cold and lifeless demeanour; with her eyes always fixed on the ground, she never deigned to cast a single look on the king, and her mouth remained closed in indissoluble silence.

The king of Persia, delighted at having made so valuable an acquisition, did not press her further, in hopes that the kind treatment he meant to show her would produce a change. He clapped his hands, and immediately several females entered, whom he ordered to provide supper. As soon as it was prepared: "My love," said he to the slave, "come this way and take your supper with me." She rose from the place where she was sitting, and when she had placed herself opposite the king, he served her before he began to eat anything himself, observing the same attention with respect to every dish that was brought on the table. The slave partook with him of the entertainment, but always with downcast eyes, and without replying a single syllable to his frequent inquiries, whether the dishes were such as she approved.

In order to change the discourse, the king inquired her name; if she was pleased with her dress and jewels; what she thought of her apartment; whether she approved the furniture; and if the view of the sea afforded her any amusement? but to all these questions she made no reply. The king, not knowing what to think of such invincible silence, at length imagined that she must be really dumb. "But," said he to himself, "is it possible that God should have formed so beautiful, so perfect, so accomplished a creature, and have left her with so great a defect? It would indeed be a sad misfortune; but, be it as it may, I cannot cease from loving her."

When the king rose from table, he retired to one side of the room in order to wash his hands, while the slave was washing hers at the other. He availed himself of this opportunity to inquire of the women who presented the basin and napkin, if she had spoken to them. "Sire," said one of them, who replied for the rest, "we have not, any more than your majesty, heard her utter a single syllable. We have attended her at the bath, we have waited on her in her chamber, have dressed her head, and assisted in putting on her apparel, but she has never opened her lips to say that she was satisfied with our attention. We asked her if she wanted anything? If there was anything she wished us to do. That we were ready to obey her commands. Whether it be owing to contempt, sorrow, stupidity, or that she is absolutely dumb, we are wholly ignorant; we can only assure your majesty that we have never been able to draw from her a single word."

The king of Persia was more than ever surprised at what he now heard. As he believed the slave to be under the pressure of some severe affliction, he used every means in his power to soothe her; amongst other amusements, he gave a ball to the ladies of his palace. Such as were able, entertained the company

by their musical performances on various instruments; the rest either sang or danced, and sometimes they all amused themselves together. At other times they played at such games as were known to be agreeable to the king. The beautiful slave alone took no part in their pleasures; she remained in the same place, her eyes constantly fixed on the ground, and with a seeming tranquillity which was not less astonishing to the ladies than to the king himself. They retired every one to their room, while the king, who alone remained, slept with the beautiful slave.

The next day the king of Persia rose more pleased than he had ever been with any other female he had hitherto seen, and more in love with the beautiful slave than on the preceding day. He did not fail to make known his affection; in short, he resolved to attach himself altogether to this lady, and he kept his resolution. On the same day he dismissed all his other ladies, presenting them with the rich dresses, jewels, and other articles of value, in which they were accustomed to appear, and gave to each of them besides, a large sum of money, and permission to marry whenever they pleased, retaining only the matrons and other aged females, whose attendance was necessary on the beautiful slave. For the space of a year he had not the consolation of hearing her utter a single word; he did not, however, remit in the least of his assiduities, but with all the complaisance imaginable continued to give her the most signal proofs of his ardent attachment.

A year had passed away when the king, sitting one day by the side of his beloved fair, warmly protested to her that his love, instead of diminishing, daily increased. "My queen," said he, "I cannot guess what passes in your mind on the subject; nothing, however, is more true than what I now solemnly swear, that I have not known what it is to form a wish since I have had the happiness of possessing you. My kingdom, great and powerful as it is in my estimation, is of no value when I have the pleasure of seeing you, and of telling you a thousand times a day how much I love you. I do not wish you to give faith to my words only, but surely you cannot doubt it after my having made a sacrifice to your charms of all the numerous females who were residing in my palace. You may remember that a year has passed away since I dismissed them all; and I as little repent at this moment of what I have done, as I did at the instant I sent them away, nor shall I ever repent of it. Nothing would be wanting to my satisfaction, my happiness, or my delight, would you but utter a single word to inform me that you are sensible of my attentions. But how can you gratify me in this, if you are really dumb? Alas! I am too much afraid that this is the case; and how can I avoid entertaining such fears, when, after the lapse of a whole year, every day of which I have entreated you a thousand times to speak to me, you still preserve so distressing a silence? If it be impossible that I can attain this happiness, may Heaven at least grant that you may give me a son to succeed me on the throne. I every day perceive myself growing older, and even at the present time I have occasion for some one to assist me in sustaining the fatigues of government. Again do I recur to the ardent desire I have to hear you speak. Something whispers to me that you are not absolutely dumb. For heaven's sake, dearest madam, I conjure you put an end to this long reserve; speak to me a single word, and let me die content."

At this discourse the beautiful slave, who, according to her custom had listened to the king with downcast eyes, and who, from uniform manner had given him reason to suspect not only that she was dumb, but that she had never laughed in her life, suffered her countenance to be illumined with a smile. The king of Persia perceived it with surprise, which occasioned him to burst out into an exclamation of delight; and as he doubted not that she was going to

He waited the moment with the most lively attention and inexpressible impatience.

The beautiful slave at length put a period to her long silence. "Sire," said she, "I have so many things to tell your majesty, now that I have broken my silence, that I know not where to begin. I believe, however, that it is my first duty to thank you for all the favours and honours you have heaped on me so abundantly, and to beg of Heaven to make you prosperous, and to avert from you all the ill intentions of your enemies; and permit you, instead of dying after having heard me speak, to lead a long and happy life. After this, sire, I cannot, I conceive, give you greater satisfaction than by informing you that I am pregnant. I wish, with you, that it may be a son. What I have more to say, sire," added she, "is this: I entreat your majesty to pardon my sincerity, that were it not for the event of which I have just informed you, I had resolved never to love you, and to maintain a perpetual silence; and that at present I love you as much as becomes me."

The king of Persia, enchanted to hear her speak, and to receive information which so highly interested him, tenderly embraced her. "Dearest light of my eyes," said he, "I cannot suppose so great a happiness as you bestow upon me. You have spoken, and you have declared yourself about to fulfil the dearest wish of my life. I scarcely know what or where I am, after two such unexpected causes of delight."

The king of Persia, in the excess of his joy, said nothing more to the beautiful slave, he left her, but in a manner that made it sufficiently apparent that he meant soon to return. Desirous that the cause of his happiness might be made public, he announced it to his officers; and having summoned his grand vizier, he gave him orders to distribute a hundred thousand pieces of gold amongst the ministers of religion who had made a vow of poverty, the hospital, the poor, and in other acts of munificence; all of which was punctually performed by the minister.

This order being given, the king of Persia returned to the beautiful slave. "Ma'am," said he, "pardon me for leaving you so abruptly, you yourself were the occasion of it; but permit me to defer my explanation till another time, as I am very anxious at present to learn from you some things of the greatest importance to me. Tell me, I entreat you, what motive can possibly have operated with you so strongly, that having seen me, heard me speak, eaten, and slept with me every day and night for a twelvemonth, you could preserve so unshaken a resolution, I do not say of not opening your lips; but of not even permitting me to know whether you understood a single word I addressed to you. This astonishes me, as I cannot conceive how you could possibly put so great a restraint upon yourself. The cause must be something very extraordinary."

To satisfy the king's curiosity, this beautiful woman replied: "Sire, to be a slave, to be far removed from one's country, to have lost all hope of ever returning thither, to have a heart pierced with grief at seeing myself separated for ever from my mother, my brother, my relations, and my acquaintance, were motives sufficiently urgent to produce that silence which has appeared to your majesty so strange. The love of one's country is not less natural than the love of one's parents; and the loss of liberty is insupportable to every one who has sense to know its value. The body may indeed be subjected to the authority of a master who has force and power in his hands, but the will can never be subdued: that remains ever the same. Your majesty has seen an instance of it in me. It is some merit to have followed the example of many of those wretched persons of both sexes, whom the love of liberty has reduced to the melancholy resolution of seeking death in a thousand ways, by the exercise of that freedom which none can take away."

"Madam," replied the king of Persia, "I am fully convinced of what you say, but still it appears to me that a person, beautiful and accomplished, of excellent sense and refined understanding, in short, with such qualities as you possess, who has been reduced by ill fortune to a state of slavery, might think herself happy in finding a king for her master."

"Sire," replied the lady, "though fortune may destine me to be a slave, yet, as I have just now said to your majesty, the will is not to be subdued, not even by royal authority. But you were, I admit, speaking of a slave capable of pleasing a monarch, and of making herself beloved by him; if the slave is of so inferior condition as to be infinitely raised by royal notice, I will readily admit that she may possibly think herself happy in the midst of her calamity. But after all, what is her happiness? She cannot but consider herself as a slave torn from the arms of her parents, and perhaps from the embraces of a lover, whom during her whole life she can never cease to lament. But if we are to suppose that this slave is in no respect inferior to the king who has obtained her, your majesty can easily conceive the rigour of her destiny, how severe must be her misery, how extreme her affliction, and what resolutions she may be able to maintain."

The king of Persia was astonished at what he heard. "What," replied he, "madam, is it possible, as your conversation leads me to think, that you yourself are of royal descent? For Heaven's sake, clear this matter, and do not further augment my impatience. Tell me, who are the happy parents who gave existence to such a prodigy of charms; who are your brothers, your sisters, your relations, and above all things tell me what is your name?"

"Sire," replied the beautiful slave, "my name is Gulnare of the Ocean; my father, who is dead, was one of the most powerful kings of the sea. At his death he left his kingdom to my brother, named Saleh, and to the queen, my mother. My mother was a princess, being the daughter of another very powerful king of the sea. We were living in our kingdom with great tranquillity, and in the most profound peace, when an enemy, envious of our happiness, invaded our states with an immense army, and penetrated even to our capital, of which he soon made himself master. We had indeed scarcely time to save ourselves, by withdrawing to a place of very difficult access, and of almost impenetrable secrecy, whither we were attended by some faithful officers, who would not abandon us.

"My brother was not negligent in this retreat; he endeavoured to discover, if possible, some means by which he might expel this unjust usurper of his authority. During this interval he one day took me aside: 'Sister,' said he in the most serious manner, 'the event of the most trivial enterprises is ever uncertain; I may possibly fail in the execution of a scheme I have long meditated for the recovery of my kingdom. I shall, however, be less concerned on my own account than at the misfortunes which may befall you. To guard against disasters, and to put you in a situation of security, I am anxious to see you married before I make my attempt; but in the forlorn state in which our affairs now are, it does not seem possible that you should be united to any prince of the sea. I wish you could be prevailed on to adopt my opinion, which is, that you should marry some prince of the earth; I am ready to give you every assistance in my power. With the beauty you possess, I am confident there is not one amongst them who will not be delighted to share with you his crown.'

"This proposal of my brother excited my extreme indignation. 'Brother,' said I, 'I, as well as yourself, both on the father's and mother's side, am descended from kings and queens of the sea, who have never condescended to an alliance with the kings of the earth. I have no desire any more than they to

make a disgraceful connexion, and I took a firm resolution not to do so from the moment I attained sufficient knowledge to perceive the grandeur and antiquity of our house. The state to which we are now reduced will not induce me to change my purpose ; and if you should unhappily die in the execution of your project, I am ready to perish with you, rather than to follow a counsel which I little expected you would give.'

"My brother, strongly prepossessed in favour of his scheme, however unpleasant it was to me, went on to represent that there were many kings of the earth who were not at all inferior to those of the sea. This put me into an extreme rage, and urged me to such passionate remonstrances as drew some severities from him, which pierced me to the soul. He departed as little satisfied with me as I was with him. In my paroxysm of anger I darted from the bottom of the sea, and continued my way to the Island of the Moon.

"Notwithstanding the piercing sorrow which had induced me to throw myself upon this island, I lived tolerably content, taking care to withdraw myself into the most retired situations. My precautions, however, did not avail : a man of some distinction, accompanied by his servants, surprised me while I was sleeping, and brought me away with him. He expressed a great deal of love, and neglected nothing to persuade me to accede to his wishes. When he found that he gained nothing by gentle means, he imagined that he should succeed better by force ; I soon, however, made him repent of his insolence ; then he resolved to dispose of me, and in consequence sold me to the merchant who brought me to your majesty. This merchant was a prudent, gentle, humane man, and in the very long journey which he made me take, gave me no occasion to speak of him but in terms of sincere commendation.

"As to what regards your majesty," continued the princess Gulnarè, "if you had not shown me all those obliging attentions, if you had not given me so many marks of your affection, with a sincerity which left no room for doubt, when without hesitation you dismissed all your women, I will not affect to conceal that I had fully intended not to continue with you. I should have thrown myself into the sea through that window where you addressed me when you first visited me in my apartment, and should have gone to seek my brother, my mother, and my other relations. I persevered for a considerable time in this intention, and would certainly have executed it, if after a certain time I had lost all hope of being a mother. In the state I am now in, I have wholly relinquished the idea, as nothing I could say to my mother and my brother would induce them to believe that I had been the slave of a king like your majesty ; but they would for ever upbraid me with having made a voluntary sacrifice of my honour. This being the case, sire, whether it be a prince or princess which I may bring into the world, it will be a constant pledge to your majesty of my never leaving you. I only hope that you will cease to consider me as a slave, and regard me as a princess not unworthy of your alliance."

It was in these terms that the princess Gulnarè made herself and her history known to the king of Persia. "My charming, my adorable princess," exclaimed the monarch, "what wonders have I heard ! what ample matter to excite curiosity, and to induce me to overwhelm you with questions in regard to things so wholly new ! But first let me thank you for your goodness, and the patience you have shown in waiting for the proofs of my sincere and unalterable love. I did not believe it possible to love more than I have loved you ; yet, since I have been informed that you are so great a princess, I adore you a thousand times more than ever. Why do I say princess ? You are no more so ; you are my queen, the queen of Persia, in the same manner as I am king ; and this title shall soon resound through my whole dominions. To-morrow it shall be proclaimed in my capital with such rejoicings as have never been seen ;"

such as shall make your splendid descent known, and that you are moreover my lawful wife. All this would have been done long since if you had relieved me sooner from my error ; as, from the very moment I first saw you, I have entertained the same resolution I hold at present—to love you always, and to love none but you.

“ In the meanwhile, that I myself may be fully satisfied, and may moreover be instructed how to render you all due respect, have the goodness to inform me more particularly of the states and people of the sea, on which subject I am wholly ignorant. I have indeed heard of persons living in the sea, but I have always considered such relations as mere fables. Nothing, however, appears to be more true, after what you have told me ; I have, indeed, a convincing proof in you, who are of marine descent, and are now my wife : an honour, such as no other inhabitant of the earth has been ever able to boast of. There is still one thing that seems unaccountable, and of which I beg you to inform me. I cannot comprehend how you are able to live, act, or move in the water without being drowned. With us there are but few persons who have the art of remaining under water ; and they perish there if they do not quit it in a certain time, according to their respective ability and strength.”

“ Sire,” replied Gulnaré, “ I will satisfy your majesty with the greatest pleasure. We are accustomed to walk at the bottom of the sea in the same manner as you do upon the earth, and are enabled to breathe in the water as others do in the air. Instead, therefore, of our being suffocated, as would be the case with you, the water contributes to our existence. What may seem also very remarkable is, that it does not wet our clothes ; and when, therefore, we visit the earth, we have no necessity of drying them. Our ordinary language is the same as that in which the inscription on the seal of the great prophet Solomon, the son of David, is written.

“ I ought not to neglect telling you that the water does not in the least prevent our seeing, as we can open our eyes in it without sustaining the least inconvenience ; as our sight is for the most part extremely good, we can, notwithstanding the depth of the sea, perceive objects in it as clearly as others do upon earth. It is the same with us at night. We have the moon to enlighten us, and the planets and the stars are not hidden. With respect also to kingdoms : as the sea is much more spacious than the earth, it affords a greater number, and some of them of greater extent. They are divided into provinces, and in every province there are a great many well-peopled towns. In short, there is with us an infinity of nations, and of different manners and customs, in the same way as upon the earth.

“ The palaces of our kings and princes are extremely superb and magnificent. They are formed of marble of different colours, of rock crystal, with which the sea abounds, of mother-of-pearl, coral, and other most valuable materials. Gold, silver, and every sort of precious stones are here in greater abundance than they are upon earth. I do not mention pearls ; the very largest that are seen on earth would be of no estimation amongst us ; and they are worn only by the common people.

“ As we have the power of transporting ourselves wherever we wish with incredible velocity, we have no occasion for carriages or equipage. None of our kings, however, are without their stables and studs of marine horses, but they are for the most part only made use of for amusements, or when we have feasts or public rejoicings. Some will take great pains in training them for riding, and afterwards mount them to show their ability in the race ; others will harness them to cars made of mother-of-pearl, ornamented with a thousand different sorts of shells, all of the most brilliant colours. These cars are made open, with a throne in the middle, in which our kings are accustomed to sit

when they show themselves to their people. They are themselves extremely skilful in the management of them, and therefore have no need of drivers. I pass over an infinity of other curious particulars in regard to these marine countries," added the queen, "a recital of which would give your majesty very great pleasure; but you must allow me to resume the conversation when I am more at leisure; at present I wish to speak to you of something of the greatest importance. It is then necessary to inform you, sire, that the women of the sea, when in a situation such as I have declared mine to be, are attended in a different manner from the women of the earth; and I have reason to fear that the assistance which this country affords, would not in my case be perfectly safe. As your majesty is in this affair equally interested as myself, I think it proper, if it is consistent with your wishes, to bring hither the queen my mother, and several of my female cousins; at the same time, I should like to see the king my brother, with whom I much wish to be reconciled. They will be delighted to see me again, when I shall have informed them of my history, and that I am the wife of the most powerful king of Persia. I entreat your majesty to comply with my wishes; they will be most glad to pay you their respects, and I can promise you that you will be very well pleased to see them."

"Madam," replied the king of Persia, "you are here sole mistress; do whatever you please; it shall be my endeavour to receive them with all the honours they so well deserve. But I request to know how you are to make them acquainted with your desire, and also when they will arrive, that I may order everything necessary for their reception, and may myself attend in person to introduce them." "Sire," replied Gulnaré, "there is no necessity for these ceremonies; they will be here in an instant, and your majesty shall see in what manner they will arrive. Only take the trouble to go into this little closet, and look through the lattice."

When the king of Persia had entered the closet, the queen ordered a perfuming pot and some fire to be brought her by one of her women, whom she then dismissed, charging her to fasten the door after her. Being now alone, she took a small piece of wood of aloes from a box, and put it in the perfuming pot, and as soon as she saw the smoke arise, she pronounced some words in a language wholly unknown to the king of Persia, who observed with great attention all that was going forwards. She had scarcely finished when the sea began to be agitated. The closet to which the king had retired was so situated that he could view the sea through the lattice.

At length, at some distance, the sea began to open itself, and immediately there arose from it a young man, extremely well made, of a very commanding figure, with mustachios of a sea-green colour. A lady somewhat advanced in years, but of a most majestic air, rose at the same time a little behind him, with five young females, whose beauty equalled that of the queen herself.

Gulnaré, who presented herself at one of the windows, immediately recognised the king her brother, the queen her mother, and her other relations, who as instantly knew her. The party advanced as if borne on the surface of the sea, and when they were all on shore, they bounded lightly one after another through the window where Queen Gulnaré had appeared, and from whence she had retired to give them room. King Saleh, the queen his mother, and all her relations, embraced her as soon as they entered, with the greatest tenderness, their eyes suffused with tears.

When Gulnaré had received them with all possible honour, and made them sit down on a sofa, the queen, her mother, addressed her as follows: "I have indescribable delight, my daughter, in seeing you again after so long an absence; and I feel sure that your brother and your relations are not less so than myself. Your departure without having said a word to any one, occasioned us all the

most inexpressible affliction, and we cannot now tell you how many tears we have shed. We could conceive no cause of your having taken so unexpected a step, unless it were in consequence of a conversation with your brother, of which he informed us. The advice he gave you appeared to him advantageous in the condition in which you and all of us then were. It need not have given you so great alarm, though it were disagreeable to you, and you must allow me now to tell you, that you considered the matter very differently from what you ought to have done. But let us not renew a subject which will only bring to our recollection causes of complaint and sorrow, which we will now endeavour to forget; do you rather inform us of what has happened to you in the long time that we have been separated, and of the state in which you now are; but above everything inform us if you are happy."

Gulnarè immediately threw herself at the feet of the queen her mother, and after she had kissed her hand, "Madam," said she, rising, "I have, I confess, been guilty of a great fault, and I can owe to nothing but your goodness, the pardon you have been so kind as to grant me. What I have to relate, in order to fulfil your commands, will make you clearly perceive how absurd it is to feel a strong repugnance to particular things. I have experienced in myself, that the very thing to which my will was most opposite, is precisely that to which my destiny has led me." She then related to her all that had happened since her indignation had induced her to quit the bottom of the sea. When she had proceeded in her history to inform them of her being sold to the king of Persia, with whom she now was: "Sister," exclaimed the king her brother, "you have been much in the wrong to suffer so many indignities, and have had no one to blame but yourself. You have always had the power of extricating yourself, and I am astonished at your patience in continuing so long in slavery; rise this moment, and return with us to my kingdom, which I have reconquered from my fierce enemy, who as you know had made himself master of it."

The king of Persia, who heard these words from the closet where he was concealed, was in the greatest alarm: "Ah," said he to himself, "I am lost; my death is certain if my queen, my Gulnarè, should listen to this cruel advice. I can no longer live without her, and they wish to deprive me of her." Gulnarè, however, did not leave him long in this state of painful apprehension.

"My dear brother," said she, smiling, "what I have just heard, convinces me more fully than ever of the sincerity of your regard for me. Formerly I could not endure the advice you gave me to marry a prince of the earth; now I feel almost angry with you for recommending me to quit my present engagement with the most powerful and most renowned of all princes. I do not speak of the engagement of a slave to a master: it would be easy to restore the ten thousand pieces of gold I have cost him; I speak of the connexion of a wife with a husband, of a wife who has never had occasion for complaint in a single instance. The monarch with whom I am united is religious, wise, moderate, and has given me the most unequivocal marks of his affection; he could not possibly afford me a more distinguished one than that of having dismissed, from the very commencement of his acquaintance with me, the great number of females of whom he had possession, in order to attach himself solely to me. I am his wife, and he has just declared me queen of Persia, and a sharer of his government. I have also to inform you, that I am with child, and if Heaven so much favours me as to give me a son, it will unite me to him still more inseparably.

"Thus, my dear brother," continued the queen, "far from following your advice, all these considerations, as you will readily perceive, oblige me not only

to love the king of Persia as much as he loves me, but even to remain and pass my life with him, as well from gratitude as from duty. I hope that neither you, my mother, nor my good cousins will disapprove my resolution, any more than the alliance I have accidentally made, which does honour equally to the monarchs of the sea and the earth. Excuse me if I have given you the trouble of coming here from the depths of the ocean to make you acquainted with it, and to have the happiness of seeing you after so long a separation."

"My dear sister," replied King Saleh, "the proposal I made to you of returning with us upon the recital of your adventures, which I have not heard without much concern, was suggested altogether by my sincere affection for you; I hope I need not say how much I honour you, and that there is nothing in the world which touches me so nearly as whatever contributes to your happiness. For these reasons, I cannot, for my own part, but highly approve the very laudable resolution you have taken, and one so entirely worthy of you, after what you have told us of the king of Persia, and of the great obligations you are under to him. With respect to the queen our mother, I am persuaded that she will entertain the same opinion."

This princess confirmed what her son had said. "My daughter," replied she, addressing herself to Gulnarè, "I am delighted to find you so happy; and I have nothing to add to what the king your brother has been saying, but to express my entire concurrence. I should be the first to condemn you, if you did not feel all the gratitude you owe to a monarch who loves you with so much ardour, and who has given you such generous proofs of his affection."

In proportion as the king of Persia, who was still in the closet, had been afflicted from the fear of losing his beloved queen, so great was the delight he felt, when he heard her resolve never to abandon him. As he could no longer doubt of her affection, after so clear a declaration, he loved her even more than ever, and cordially resolved within himself to show his gratitude by every means in his power.

While the king of Persia was, with extreme pleasure, forming to himself these resolutions, Queen Gulnarè had struck with her hands, and had commanded some slaves, who entered immediately, to serve up some refreshments. As soon as they were brought, she invited her mother, her brother, and her other relations, to partake of them. But they were all of opinion that, as they were then without permission in the palace of a most potent monarch, whom they had never seen, and to whom they were wholly unknown, it would be a mark of the greatest incivility to sit down to his table without some previous introduction. The colour immediately mounted into their cheeks, and so great was their emotion, that fire shot from their nostrils and their mouths, and their eyes seemed all in flames.

The king of Persia was inexpressibly alarmed at this appearance, so entirely unexpected, and of which he so little knew the cause. Queen Gulnarè, who imagined what his feelings might be, and perfectly comprehended the intention of her friends, rose from her seat, saying that she should soon return. She went immediately to the king, who was much comforted by her presence: "Sire," said she, "I doubt not that your majesty is fully satisfied with the proof I have just given of my regard, and of the grateful sense I feel of the vast obligations I owe you. It rested entirely with myself to follow the wishes of my friends, and to return with them to our country; but I am incapable of such ingratitude, which indeed I should be the first to condemn." "Ah! my queen," cried the king of Persia, "do not talk of obligations, you have none to me. I am indeed obliged to you, in a way that I can never return. I could not have believed that you love me to the degree which it appears you do. You have assured me of it in the most satisfactory way." "Ah! sire,"

returned Gulnarè, "could I possibly do less than I have done? It seems but a small return after all the honours I have received, after the many favours you have heaped upon me, after so many instances of love, to which I could not be insensible."

"But, sire," added she, "allow me to drop this discourse, and assure you of the sincere friendship of the queen my mother, and the king my brother. They are very anxious to see you, and to assure you themselves of their high esteem. I had intended to make a party with them at the table I have had furnished with refreshments, before I had solicited an introduction, but I now entreat your majesty to have the goodness to enter, and to honour then with your presence."

"My princess," replied the king of Persia, "I shall have great pleasure in being introduced to any persons who are so nearly connected with you; but the flames which I have observed to proceed from their mouth and nostrils, somewhat alarms me." "Sire," replied the queen, smiling, "do not allow these flames to give you the least uneasiness. They merely expressed their unwillingness to partake of the collation prepared, until your majesty should honour them with your presence."

The king of Persia, encouraged by this declaration, rose from his place, and entered the chamber with Queen Gulnarè, who presented him to the queen her mother, to the king her brother, and to her cousins, who immediately prostrated themselves, with their faces to the earth. The king of Persia ran to them immediately, compelled them to rise, and embraced each of them in turn. After they were all seated, King Saleh thus delivered himself:—"Sire," said he to the king of Persia, "we cannot sufficiently express to your majesty the joy we feel at the good fortune of Queen Gulnarè my sister, to be taken from a situation of disgrace and placed under the protection of so potent a monarch. Permit us to assure you, she is not unworthy the high rank to which she has the honour to be raised. We have ever felt so great an affection and tenderness for her, that we could not resolve to part with her to one of the most powerful princes of the sea, who had solicited her in marriage, even before she was of age. Heaven reserved her for you, sire, and we cannot better return thanks for the favour it has done both her and us, than in offering prayers for your majesty, and that you may long experience with your queen every sort of prosperity and happiness."

"It is evident," replied the king of Persia, "that the bounty of Heaven reserved her for me, as you have observed. The affection I feel for her makes me fully sensible that till I saw her I never loved. I cannot sufficiently make known the gratitude I feel to the queen her mother, nor to you, prince, and the rest of your family, at the generous manner in which you have received me into an alliance that confers on me so much glory." Having said this, he invited them to take a seat at the table, where he also placed himself by the side of his queen. The repast being finished, the king of Persia continued in conversation with them till the night was far advanced; at length, when it became necessary to retire, he conducted them himself to the several apartments that had been prepared for them.

The king of Persia made perpetual feast for the entertainment of his illustrious guests, displaying throughout the whole, the most excessive grandeur and magnificence, and thus insensibly led them on to continue at his court until the time of the queen's delivery. As it more nearly approached, he gave orders that nothing should be wanting which could possibly be necessary at so important a juncture. She was at length brought to bed, and gave to the world a son, to the infinite joy of the queen her mother, who assisted on the occasion; this good lady went immediately to present the child, as soon as he was arrayed in the magnificent robes prepared, to his royal father.

The king of Persia received the present with that excess of delight which it is more easy to conceive than express. As the countenance of the young prince, her son, was open in its expression, and of transcendent beauty, it seemed to him that he could not give him a more characteristic name than that of Beder (the full moon). To express his thanks to Heaven, he ordered considerable alms to be given to the poor, released the prisoners from their confinement, gave liberty to all his slaves of both sexes, and distributed large sums of money amongst the ministers and holy men of his religion. He also made great presents to his court and his people, and public festivals were held by his order for many days in every part of the city.

After Queen Gulnarè had recovered from her confinement, the king of Persia, the queen her mother, King Saleh her brother, and the princesses her relations, were one day conversing together in the chamber of the queen, when the nurse entered with Beder in her arms. King Saleh rose immediately from his place, ran to the little prince, and after having taken him from the nurse's arms, began to caress him with the greatest marks of tenderness. He continued playing with him, making several turns about the chamber, and holding him up between his hands, when on a sudden, in a transport of joy, he darted through the window, which was open, and plunged with the infant prince into the sea.

The king of Persia, wholly unprepared for this event, gave a dreadful shriek, in the belief that he should never again see his beloved son, or at least that he would not be restored to him alive. His affliction had nearly deprived him of his senses; tears were the only alleviation to his misery. "Sire," said Gulnarè, with a countenance and manner that were calculated to inspire him with hope, "may it please your majesty to dismiss your fears. The young prince is my son as well as yours, and I do not love him less than you do; yet you see that I am not in the least alarmed; indeed, I have no occasion to be so. He runs, I assure you, no risk whatever, and you will soon see the king his uncle reappear, and restore him to us in perfect safety. Although he is descended from you, yet as he belongs to me also, he will not fail to have the advantage which we enjoy, that of being equally able to live either in the sea or on earth." The queen her mother, and the princesses her relations, gave him the same assurances; but their assertions failed to remove his fears.

The sea at length became agitated, and soon after King Saleh reappeared, rising from the waves with the little prince in his arms; he then, glancing through the air, returned by the same window he went out at. The king of Persia was delighted, but expressed much surprise to see Prince Beder altogether as tranquil as when he left the room. "Was not your majesty alarmed," asked King Saleh, "when you saw me plunge into the sea with the prince my nephew?" "Ah! prince," replied the king of Persia, "I cannot express to you how much I was terrified. From the moment he disappeared, I believed him irrecoverably lost; in bringing him back you have given me new life." "Sire," replied King Saleh, "I was apprehensive you would be distressed, but there was not the least occasion for your being so. Before I threw myself into the sea, I pronounced over him some mysterious words, which were graven on the seal of the great King Solomon, the son of David. We observe the same ceremony with regard to all the children who are born amongst us in the profound regions of the sea; and in virtue of these words they obtain the privilege that we possess above all the inhabitants of the earth. From what your majesty has just witnessed, you may easily judge of the great advantages Prince Beder derives in being descended from Queen Gulnarè, my sister. While he lives he may, as often as he pleases, plunge freely into the sea, and visit the vast empires which are contained within its bosom."

King Saleh having spoken, restored the little Prince Beder to the arms of his nurse. He then opened a box which he had brought from his palace during the short time of his absence. It contained three hundred diamonds, each as large as a pigeon's egg, a like number of rubies of very extraordinary magnitude, as many wands of emerald, each six inches long, and thirty pearl necklaces, every necklace consisting of ten rows. "Sire," said he to the king of Persia, presenting to him the box at the same time, "when we were summoned hither, by the queen, my sister, we were ignorant in what part of the world she resided, and that she had the honour of being married to so great a monarch. It was for this reason that we came with empty hands. As then it was not in our power to give your majesty any immediate mark of our gratitude, we humbly entreat that you will now deign to accept this slight return for the very extraordinary favours you have had the goodness to confer on her, and of which she is not more sensible than we are."

It is impossible to express how great was the king's surprise when he saw such abundance of riches contained in so small a place. "What! prince," he exclaimed, "do you call this a slight mark of your gratitude, in bestowing upon me, to whom you owe nothing, so inestimable a present? I declare to you again, that you are under no obligation whatever to me, neither the queen your mother, nor yourself. I feel myself too happy in your having consented to the alliance I have contracted with your family. My princess," said he, turning round to Gulnârê, "the king your brother overwhelms me with confusion, and I would fain entreat him to allow me to decline his present, were I not apprehensive of giving him offence. Do you request him to excuse me from accepting it."

"Sire," replied King Saleh, "I am not surprised that your majesty should think this present rather extraordinary; I am aware that upon the earth it is not usual to see jewels of this quality, and in so great abundance. But if you knew, as I do, where the mines are from whence they are drawn, and that it is in my power to collect from thence a greater treasure than is possessed by all the kings of the earth, your majesty would be justly astonished that I have presumed to make you so trivial an acknowledgment. We beg, therefore, that you will not consider our present in respect to its intrinsic value, but as a pledge of that sincere friendship which has induced us to offer it. Do not then inflict on us the severe mortification of refusing to receive it, in the same spirit of amity with which it is bestowed." Such generous behaviour compelled the king of Persia to accede, which he did in terms that expressed his deep sense of the obligation he was under to the illustrious donor and his royal mother.

It was not long after this that King Saleh found it necessary to address the king of Persia on the subject of his departure. He assured him that the queen his mother, the princesses his relations, and himself, could not possibly have greater pleasure than to pass their whole life at his court; but, as they had now been long absent from their kingdom, and as their presence there was become necessary, he begged him not to be displeased if they took their leave of him and Queen Gulnârê. The king of Persia assured them that he was extremely sorry not to have it in his power to repay their civility by returning the visit; "but as I am persuaded," added he, "that you will not forget Queen Gulnârê, but will be anxious to see her from time to time, I hope to have the honour of seeing you frequently."

When the moment of separation arrived, abundance of tears were shed on every side. King Saleh was the first who withdrew; the queen his mother and the princesses were obliged, in order to follow him, to tear themselves from the embraces of Queen Gulnârê, who could not prevail with herself to suffer them to depart. As soon this royal party had disappeared, the king of Persia could

not refrain from saying to Gulnarè: "Princess, if any one had told me, as truths, the marvellous things to which I have been witness since your illustrious family first honoured my palace with their presence, I should have considered him as a person who wished to abuse my credulity. But I cannot distrust my own eyes: never shall I forget what I have seen, or cease to thank Heaven for having bestowed on me, in preference to every other prince, its most valuable gift."

Prince Beder was brought up in the palace, under the immediate inspection of his royal parents, who saw his increasing growth and beauty with the most lively satisfaction, which was daily augmented as he advanced in age, by the continued good humour he displayed, by his agreeable manner in everything he did, and by that correct judgment and vivacity of understanding which were evident in all he said. Their happiness was rendered more complete by being frequently shared with King Saleh his uncle, the queen his grandmother, and the princesses his cousins, who often came to partake of it. No difficulty was found in teaching the young prince the necessary arts of reading and writing; nor did he fail to learn with equal facility all the sciences which were suitable to a prince of his elevated rank.

When the prince of Persia had arrived at the age of fifteen years, he acquitted himself in all his exercises with infinitely more skill and address than his masters. Besides this, he was endowed with extraordinary wisdom and prudence. The king of Persia, who had observed in him, almost from the hour of his birth, the seeds of all those virtues so necessary to a sovereign, and had seen them augment with his years, perceiving, moreover, the infirmities of age daily to increase upon himself, became desirous that the prince's succession to the throne should not depend upon his own life; he wished immediately to resign to him the kingdom. He had no difficulty in inducing his council to accede to his wishes, and the people heard of his resolution with much satisfaction, being fully satisfied that the prince was in every respect worthy of ruling over them. He had, indeed, for a very considerable time been accustomed to appear in public, and they had had opportunities of remarking that he did not carry himself in that haughty and forbidding manner which is so common with other princes, who look upon everything beneath them with such an air of loftiness and disdain, as is scarcely to be tolerated. They had observed, on the contrary, that he behaved himself towards all with such benignity of manner as invited their approach; that he listened attentively to those who had occasion to speak to him, and that he answered them with a kindness and courtesy peculiar to himself; and that he refused the request of no one, provided it was just and reasonable.

The day for the ceremony was fixed, when, surrounded by his council, which was on this occasion more numerous than ordinary, the king of Persia descended from the throne, on which he was sitting, and having taken the crown from his own head, placed it upon that of the prince; then, having assisted him to ascend the throne he had quitted, he kissed his hand, as a mark that he had given up to him all his power and sovereignty; after which he took a seat beneath him, amongst the viziers and emirs.

The viziers and emirs, and all the principal officers, immediately came forward to prostrate themselves at the feet of the new king, and each took the oaths of fidelity and allegiance, according to his rank. This being concluded, the grand vizier made a report to him of some important affairs of government, on all which he delivered himself with so much wisdom, that he became the admiration of the council. He afterwards deposed many governors, who had been convicted of maladministration, and supplied their places with others, showing in his choice such equity and discernment, as drew praises from every one;

which were more honourable, as they were free from flattery. He at length quitted the council, and accompanied by the king his father, went to the apartment of Gulnarè. The queen no sooner saw him with the crown upon his head, than she ran and embraced him with the greatest tenderness, expressing her ardent wishes that his reign might be long and happy.

During the first year of his reign, King Beder acquitted himself of all the royal duties with the greatest assiduity. Above everything he took care to instruct himself in the real state of affairs, and in every matter which could contribute to the happiness of his subjects. The following year, having previously arranged the administration of affairs with his council, and being sanctioned by the approbation of the old king his father, he left his capital, under the pretence of taking the diversion of hunting; but it was in reality, to visit all the provinces of his kingdom, in order to correct abuses, to establish everywhere good order and discipline, and to take away from the princes, his neighbours, who were entertaining wishes of hostility, the hope of effecting anything against the peace and security of his states, by showing himself upon the frontiers.

A full year was necessary to enable the young king to execute a design so worthy of him. It was not long after his return, that the king his father became so dangerously ill, as to be convinced from the first that he should never recover. He looked forward to his last moments with the most perfect tranquillity, having no other care than to recommend to the ministers and lords of the court, to remain always in the fidelity they had sworn to his son. They all renewed their oath with the same good-will they had before shown. He soon after drew his last breath, to the great affliction of King Beder and Queen Gulnarè, who had the body deposited in a superb mausoleum, with all the pomp that became his exalted dignity.

After the funeral was over, King Beder found no difficulty in complying with the custom of Persia, of bewailing the deceased for one entire month, and seeing in this interval no person whatever. He would have lamented for the loss of his father during his whole life, had he attended merely to the dictates of his heart, and had it been consistent with the duties of so great a king to abandon himself wholly to grief. In the mean time, the queen the mother of Queen Gulnarè, and King Saleh, with the princesses their relations, arrived, and shared in the affliction of the queen and her son, before they ventured to speak to them of consolation.

When the month was elapsed, the king could no longer dispense with giving admittance to the grand vizier and all the lords of his court, who entreated him to lay aside his mourning, to appear before his subjects, and to undertake, as before, the charge of public affairs. He first expressed a great unwillingness to attend to them, when the grand vizier was obliged to take up the subject, and thus address him: "It is not necessary, sire, to represent to your majesty, that it partakes of female pertinacity, to continue in perpetual mourning. We cannot doubt that you are fully sensible of this, and that it is by no means your intention to follow such example. Neither our tears nor yours can restore to life the king your father, should we continue to weep for the remainder of our days. He has submitted to the law common to all men, and paid the indispensable tribute of our nature. We cannot, however, say absolutely that he is dead, since we behold him again in your sacred person. He himself had no doubt when dying that he should be revived in you; it belongs, therefore, to your majesty to prove that he was not deceived."

King Beder, unable to resist these pressing entreaties, put off his mourning from that moment; and having reassumed the habiliments and ensigns of royalty, he began to provide for the necessities of his kingdom, and of his

individual subjects, with the attention he had always shown previous to his father's death. So exact was he in following the ordinances of his predecessors, that the people were hardly sensible of any change of authority.

King Saleh, who had returned to his kingdom of the sea, with the queen his mother, and the princesses, as soon as King Beder had reassumed the reins of government, revisited alone, at the end of the year, King Beder and Queen Gulnaré, who were delighted to see him. One evening, after the table had been removed, and they were left by themselves, the conversation of King Saleh fell insensibly upon the praises of the king his nephew. He remarked to his sister how fully he was satisfied with the wisdom with which he governed, and which had gained him a great reputation, not only amongst the kings his neighbours, but even in kingdoms the most remote. Beder, much embarrassed at hearing himself so highly commended, and too complaisant to impose silence on his uncle, turned himself on one side and pretended to sleep, while he rested his head upon a cushion that was placed behind him.

After having noticed the extraordinary prudence and understanding of Beder, the king went on to notice his personal perfections, and spoke of him as a prodigy unequalled on earth, or in any of the countries he had known beneath the waters of the sea. "Sister," he exclaimed on a sudden, "so perfect as he is, and such as he must appear to you, I am astonished that you have not yet thought of uniting him in marriage. If I mistake not, he is now in his twentieth year, an age at which it is not permitted to a prince like him to remain single. I am disposed to undertake myself, since you seem to pay no attention to it, to find a queen for him in some princess of our kingdoms, whom I may deem worthy of him."

"Brother," replied Queen Gulnaré, "you bring to my notice what I must confess to you has never till the present moment occupied my thoughts. My son has never expressed any desire to be married, and the matter had never occurred to me, but I am extremely glad that you have put me in mind of it. As I entirely approve your design, I must depend on your goodness to procure him a consort, who will I hope be so handsome and accomplished that my son will feel himself compelled to love her."

"I know one," replied King Saleh, speaking in a low tone of voice, "but before I tell you who she is, I must beg you to observe whether the king my nephew be really asleep. I will give you my reason why it is proper to take this precaution." The queen turned herself to make the necessary observation, and as she saw Beder in the situation described, she had no suspicion but that he was in a profound sleep. Beder, however, far from being in that state, redoubled his attention, that he might not lose one word of what his uncle was going to impart with so much secrecy. "You need not restrain yourself," said the queen to her brother; "you may speak as freely as you please, without the smallest fear of being overheard."

"It is not desirable," returned King Saleh, "that the king my nephew should be made acquainted immediately with what I am going to say. Love, as you know, sometimes gains admission by the ear, and it may not be convenient that he should love on report the lady I am about to mention, as I foresee great difficulties to be surmounted, not as I hope on the part of the princess, but on that of the king her father. I have only to mention to you the princess Giauharé and the king of Samandal."

"What do you say, brother?" replied the queen Gulnaré; "is not the princess Giauharé yet married? I remember to have seen her a little while before I left you; she was then about eighteen months old, and even then her beauty was really astonishing; she must now be quite a wonder of the world, if it has gone on increasing from that time. She is but little older than my

son, and that need not to deter us from our endeavours to procure for him so advantageous a match. What are the difficulties you will have to encounter?"

"Sister," replied King Saleh, "I apprehend much inconvenience from the king of Samandal. His vanity is so excessive that he looks upon himself as superior to all other kings, and it seems unlikely that he will consent to treat on the subject of this alliance. I will, however, myself wait upon him to request for my nephew the hand of the princess his daughter, and if he refuse, we will address ourselves where we may expect to be more favourably received. For this reason, as you perceive," added he, "it is very desirable that my nephew should know nothing of our purpose till we are certain of the king of Samandal's consent, for fear his affection for the princess Giauharè should take strong possession of him, and we should be at last unable to succeed in procuring her." They continued to converse for some time upon this subject, and before they separated, it was agreed that King Saleh should return immediately to his kingdom, and should demand of the king of Samandal the hand of the princess Giauharè for the king of Persia.

Queen Gulnarè and King Saleh, who had no doubt that Beder was asleep, roused him as they were about to retire, when the king succeeded perfectly in making them believe he was really recovering from a deep sleep. The fact, however, was, that he had not lost a single word of their conversation, and that the picture they had drawn of the princess Giauharè had excited a passion altogether new in his breast. He formed to himself so exalted an idea of her beauty, that the hope of possessing her occasioned him to pass the whole night in so much agitation, that he was unable to close his eyes for a moment.

King Saleh proposed to take leave the next day of Queen Gulnarè and of the king his nephew. The young king of Persia, who was well aware that his uncle had no intention in leaving them so soon, but to prevent any loss of time in the execution of the scheme he had formed for his happiness, could not hear of his departure without showing evident marks of interest by the frequent changes of his countenance. His passion was already so strong that he could not endure the idea of being precluded from beholding the object that occasioned it during so long a time as would be necessary to arrange a formal treaty of marriage. He took the resolution of requesting his uncle to take him with him; but, as he was desirous that his mother should know nothing of the matter, in order that he might have an opportunity of speaking to him in private, he engaged him to defer his journey for a day or two, to be of a hunting-party with him, resolving to profit of this opportunity to make his wishes known.

The hunting-party took place, and King Beder found himself several times alone with his uncle, but he could never summon courage to utter a single word of all that he had before determined to say. In the height of the chase, when King Saleh had separated himself from him, and no one of his officers or attendants remained near him, he alighted from his horse, near a brook, and having fastened the animal to a tree, which, with many others that bordered it, made a beautiful shade along its banks, he reclined upon the grass, and gave free scope to his tears, which flowed in abundance, accompanied with frequent sighs. He remained a long time in this state, wholly absorbed in reflection, without uttering a single word.

In the mean time, King Saleh, who no longer saw his nephew, was extremely anxious to know what was become of him, but could find no one who could give the least information. He then separated himself from the party to go in search of him, and soon after perceived him at some distance. He had observed the day before, and more evidently on the present day, that his nephew had not his usual spirits; that he was, contrary to custom, pensive

and reserved, and by no means ready to give an answer to any question that was proposed to him. But he had not the least suspicion of the cause of this change. As soon as he saw him in the situation described, he had not a doubt in his mind but the king had overheard the conversation between himself and the queen his mother, and that he was thoroughly in love. He descended from his horse at some distance, and having tied him to a tree, approached in a circuitous manner, and without making the least noise, till he came sufficiently near to hear the young king pronounce these words:—

"Amiable princess of the kingdom of Samandal," he exclaimed, "it is but a feeble sketch that has been given me of thy beauty, which I doubt not more excels that of all the princesses in the world than the splendour of the sun is superior to that of the moon, or of the other heavenly bodies. I would go this moment to make thee an offering of my heart, did I but know where to find thee: it is thine, and never shall any princess but thyself possess it."

King Saleh did not wish to hear more; he advanced, so as to be perceived by King Beder. "From what I perceive, nephew," said he, "you overheard yesterday what the queen your mother and myself were saying about the princess Giauhare. We should have been more on our guard, but that we believed you were asleep." "My dear uncle," returned King Beder, "I did not lose a single word of your conversation, and I have fully experienced the effect you foresaw, and which you were so anxious to prevent. I detained you for the express purpose of informing you of the state of my heart, but the confusion I felt when I wished to have made known my weakness, if indeed it be a weakness to love a princess so worthy of affection, absolutely closed my lips. I entreat you, then, by all the friendship you entertain for one who has the honour of being so nearly allied to you, that you will extend your pity to me, and not defer to procure me a sight of the divine Giauhare till you have obtained the consent of the king her father to our marriage, if you wish to prevent my dying for the love of her before I see her."

This discourse of the king of Persia extremely embarrassed King Saleh, who represented to him the great difficulty there would be in obtaining for him the satisfaction he wished; that he could not do it without taking him with him, while his presence in his own kingdom was so necessary, that much inconvenience might be apprehended from his absence; he entreated him to moderate his passion till matters could be put in a proper train, assuring him that he would employ every means in his power to secure the success they both so much wished, and that he would at all events give him an account of his mission in a very few days. The king of Persia was deaf to all these arguments. "Unkind uncle," he exclaimed, "it is too apparent that you do not love me so much as I believed, and that you would rather see me die with anxiety than grant me the first prayer that I ever made to you in my life."

"I am ready to convince your majesty," replied King Saleh, "that there is nothing I will not do to oblige you, but I cannot possibly agree to your departure with me till you have mentioned it to the queen your mother. What would she say of us both? I am willing, if she consent, and I will even add my entreaties to your own." "You are not ignorant," replied the king of Persia, "that my mother will never consent to my leaving her; this excuse, therefore, makes me perceive more clearly the little inclination you have to please me. If you loved me as much as you would sometimes make me believe, you would at once return to your kingdom, and take me with you."

King Saleh, compelled to yield to the king of Persia's solicitation, drew off a ring which he wore on his finger, on which were engraven the same mysterious names of the Deity as were upon the seal of Solomon, and which by their virtue had produced such miraculous effects. In presenting it to him, "Take

this ring," said he, "put it upon your finger, and fear neither the waters nor the depth of the sea." The king of Persia took the ring and put it on his finger. After which, King Saleh said to him, "Do as I do:" at the same time they rose together lightly in the air, and proceeding towards the sea, which was not very distant, they immediately plunged into it.

It was not long before his marine majesty arrived at the palace, accompanied by the king of Persia his nephew, whom he immediately conducted to the apartment of the queen, and presented him to her. The king of Persia kissed the hand of the queen his grandmother, who in her turn embraced him with the most lively demonstrations of joy. "I do not inquire after your health," said she; "I perceive that you are perfectly well, and it delights me to find you so; but I am very anxious to learn some intelligence of my daughter, Queen Gulnarè." The king of Persia took especial care not to divulge that he left his palace without taking leave of her: on the contrary, he assured his grandmother that she was in perfect health, and that he was charged to present her most dutiful and affectionate regards. The queen presented him afterwards to the princesses, and while they were engaged in conversation together, she withdrew into her closet with King Saleh, who informed her of the dilemma in which the love which the king of Persia had conceived for the princess Giauharè, on the mere description of her beauty, had placed him.

Although, to speak properly, King Saleh was the innocent cause of the king of Persia's passion, the queen was nevertheless much dissatisfied with his conduct in having spoken before him with so little precaution of the princess Giauharè. "Your imprudence," said she, "is unpardonable; can you hope that the king of Samandal, whose character you so well know, will have more respect for you than for so many other sovereigns, whose suit he has rejected with such open marks of contempt? Are you desirous to be sent away with a similar disgrace?"

"Madam," replied King Saleh, "I have already observed to you, that the being overheard by the king my nephew in the relation I gave to my sister concerning the beauty of the princess Giauharè, was wholly contrary to my wish or intention. But the mischief is done; and we are now to remember that he is passionately in love, and that he will die with grief if we do not obtain her for him, by whatever means it may be effected. I feel that, however innocently, it is I who have done the evil, and that it is therefore my duty, as it is my inclination, to contribute everything in my power towards providing a remedy. I hope, madam, you will approve of the resolution I have taken to wait upon the king of Samandal myself to offer him a rich present of jewels, and to demand the princess his daughter for the king of Persia, your grandson. I entertain some confidence that he will not refuse me, and that he will consent to an alliance with one of the most powerful monarchs of the earth."

"It were to be wished," replied the queen, "that we had not been reduced to the necessity of making this demand, for the success of which we have so great reason to fear; but as it is the object of our present consideration to give repose and satisfaction to the king my grandson, I shall not withhold my consent to your scheme. Above all things, since you so well know the humour of the king of Samandal, take care, I entreat you, to address him with all that high respect which is due to him, and in terms so obliging that he cannot possibly take offence."

The queen herself prepared the present, which consisted of diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and rows of pearls; these were deposited in an extremely rich and beautiful casket. King Saleh took leave next day of the queen his mother, and the king of Persia; setting off with a small and select retinue of his officers and servants, he soon reached the kingdom, the capital, and even the palace of the

king of Samandal, who, as soon as he heard of his arrival, gave him audience. He rose from his throne when King Saleh first made his appearance, who was willing for a few moments to forget his rank, and prostrate himself at the feet of the monarch, wishing him the accomplishment of all he could desire. The king of Samandal stooped immediately in order to raise him, and having given him a place near him, he assured him of the satisfaction he had in seeing him, and requested to know if there were anything he could do to serve him.

"Sire," replied King Saleh, "if in the journey I have taken, I have no other motive than to pay my respects to one of the most powerful princes the world has known, to a prince equally distinguished by his wisdom and his valour, I should but feebly express to your majesty how much I esteem and honour you. If you could penetrate the bottom of my heart, you would perceive the great veneration I entertain for your majesty, and the ardent desire I have to give you some proofs of my attachment." Having thus spoken, he took the casket from the hands of one of his attendants, and presenting it to him, entreated that he would have the goodness to accept it.

"Prince," replied the king of Samandal, "you would not offer a present of this value if you had not some proportionate favour to ask. If it be anything within my power, it will give me the greatest pleasure to accede to your wish. Speak, and tell me freely in what way I can serve you."

"It is true, sire," replied King Saleh, "that I have a favour to ask of your majesty, who may be assured that I should be careful not to request what it is not in your majesty's power to grant; the thing indeed depends so entirely upon yourself, it would be altogether useless to apply to any one else. I venture therefore to urge my petition with all possible earnestness, and to beg that you will not refuse compliance." "If this be the case," replied the king of Samandal, "you have only to inform me of your wishes, to be witness of the happiness it will give me to oblige you in anything within the limits of my authority."

"Sire," said King Saleh, "your majesty having encouraged me to place so great a confidence in your good will, I will no longer dissemble that I am come hither to entreat you to honour us with your alliance through the marriage of the princess Giauhare, your illustrious daughter, and thus to confirm that amity and good understanding which for so long a time have subsisted between our two kingdoms."

At this proposal the king of Samandal burst out in a violent fit of laughter, throwing himself backward in his seat, in order to rest himself on the cushion behind him, in a manner that was highly insulting to King Saleh. "King Saleh," said he, with an air of contempt, "I had always looked upon you as a wise and considerate prince, and as possessed of much good sense; and I am sorry to find, from what I have just heard from you, how entirely I have been deceived. Tell me, I beg, where could your understanding possibly be wandering when you formed to yourself so extravagant a chimera as that of which you have been speaking? Could you really harbour a thought of aspiring to the hand of a princess descended from so great and powerful a monarch as I am? You ought well to have considered the immense distance there is between you and me, ere you came hither to sacrifice in a moment the good opinion I have always entertained of you."

King Saleh was most excessively offended at this insolent answer, and had great difficulty in restraining his just resentment: he replied, however, with all possible moderation, "May God reward your majesty as you deserve; allow me the honour to tell you that I do not solicit the princess your daughter in marriage for myself; but had this been the case, far from its being an occasion of just offence either to your majesty or the princess herself, I cannot but flatter myself that it would have done equal honour to all parties. Your majesty cannot but

know that I, as well as yourself, am one of the kings of the sea; that the kings, my predecessors, yield in the antiquity and splendour of their house to no sovereign whatever; and that the kingdom which I inherit from them is not less flourishing or powerful than it has ever been. But be this as it may, had I not been interrupted, you would have been informed that the favour I asked was not for myself, but for the young king of Persia, my nephew, with whose power and grandeur, as well as personal qualities, you cannot be unacquainted. Everybody admits that the princess Giauharè is the most beautiful creature beneath the heavens; but it is no less true that the young king of Persia has the finest figure, and is the most accomplished young man that lives on the earth, or in any of the kingdoms of the sea; these are facts admitted on all sides. As, then, the favour I demand will reflect much honour both on yourself and the princess Giauharè, you can have no reason to apprehend that your consent to so proper and equal an alliance will not meet with universal approbation. The princess is undoubtedly worthy of the king of Persia, nor is the king less worthy of her."

The king of Samandal would not have given King Saleh an opportunity of speaking for so long a time, had not the rage he felt deprived him of all power of utterance. It was some time after the other had ceased before he could recover his speech. He at length broke out in terms of the grossest abuse, and altogether unworthy a king. "Dog!" he exclaimed, "dare you to hold this insolent language, and even to utter the name of my daughter before me? Do you imagine that the son of your sister Gulnarè can enter into comparison with my daughter? Who are you? Who was your father? Who is your sister? and who is your nephew? Was not his father a reptile, and the son of a reptile like yourself? Seize the insolent wretch this moment, and cut off his head."

A few officers who were about the person of the king of Samandal prepared immediately to obey his orders, but as King Saleh was in the full vigour of life, and extremely light and active, he escaped before they had drawn their sabres, and gained the palace gate, where he met a thousand of his relations and friends well armed and equipped, who had just arrived. The queen his mother, having considered how few attendants he had taken with him, and entertaining some apprehension of the sort of reception the king of Samandal might give him, had sent off this party, entreating them to proceed with the greatest possible diligence. His relations at the head of the troop were much gratified at having arrived so very opportunely, when they saw him approaching in haste, and his people following in great disorder, and others pursuing them. "Sire," cried they the moment he joined them, "what's the matter? We are ready to avenge you; you have only to command us."

King Saleh, in a very few words, informed them of the affair; he then put himself at the head of a considerable party, leaving the rest in possession of the gate, which they had seized, and returned back towards the palace. The few officers and guards who had pursued him having been dispersed, he re-entered the apartment of the king of Samandal, who, being abandoned by those about him, was instantly seized. King Saleh having left a sufficient number of his party about the king to secure his person, he went from room to room in search of the princess Giauharè; but this lady had at the very beginning of the confusion, accompanied by the females her attendants, darted to the surface of the sea, and escaped to a desert island.

Whilst these things were passing at the palace of the king of Samandal, some of King Saleh's people, who had taken flight on the first menaces they had heard against their royal master, put the queen his mother into very great alarm, by informing her of the danger in which they had left him. The young King Beder, who was present at their arrival, was so much the more shocked,

as he considered himself the first and chief cause of all the mischief which might ensue. He did not feel himself sufficiently in spirits to support the presence of the queen his grandmother, in the forlorn situation in which he believed King Saleh to be in entirely on his account. While, therefore, she was occupied in giving such orders as was necessary in the present posture of affairs, he darted from the bottom of the sea, and being ignorant of the road to Petsia, ascended to the same island in which the princess Giauhare had already made her escape.

This prince, in a very dejected state of mind, seated himself at the foot of a great tree, which was surrounded by many others. While he was there, endeavouring to recover his spirits, he heard the sound of a voice; he immediately began to listen attentively; but being too distant to understand a syllable of what he heard, he rose from his seat, when, advancing without the least noise to the place whence the sound came, he perceived through the foliage a lady of such exquisite beauty, as wholly dazzled him. "Without doubt," said he to himself, while he stopped and surveyed her with an eye of astonishment,—“without doubt, this is the princess Giauhare, who has been compelled by terror to abandon the palace of the king her father; but whosoever she be, she seems not less to deserve that I should love her with my whole heart.” He did not pause any longer, but immediately approached to the princess, with a profound reverence: “Madam,” said he, “I cannot sufficiently thank heaven for the favour it has done me, in presenting to my view so much beauty; no greater happiness can possibly befall me than the being able to offer you my most humble services. I entreat you to accept them: a person like you cannot be in such a solitude as this without having need of assistance.”

“It is indeed, sir,” replied the princess Giauhare, with an air of great melancholy, “a very unusual thing for a lady of my rank to find herself in the forlorn state I am now in. I am, sir, a princess, daughter of the king of Samandal, and am called Giauhare. I was living very quietly in his palace, when I heard a sudden and most dreadful noise. Some of my people came immediately to inform me, that King Saleh, for I know not what reason, had forced the palace, and seized on the king my father, after having laid violent hands on those of his guard who had made resistance. I had only time to save myself, and to seek an asylum in this place from his rage.”

On hearing this account from the princess, King Beder, in much confusion, silently reproached himself for having so abruptly quitted the queen his grandmother, without having waited the arrival of more accurate information than the report of a few terrified fugitives. He was, however, delighted that the king, his uncle, had made himself master of the king of Samandal's person, not doubting that the latter, for the sake of regaining his liberty, would readily agree to his union with the princess. “Adorable princess,” he replied, “your concern is just; but it is easy to put a period both to that and to the captivity of the king your father. You will, I doubt not, agree with me, when you know that my name is Beder, that I am king of Persia, and that King Saleh is my uncle. I can confidently assure you, that he has no intention of seizing on the dominions of the king your father; nor has he any other object in view than to prevail with him to allow me the honour and happiness of being his son-in-law, by receiving you from his royal hand. I had already given you my heart on the mere report of your charms. Far from repenting of the gift, I now entreat you to receive it, and to be assured that it will never beat but for you. I presume to hope that you will not refuse me, and that you will even be of opinion, that a king who has quitted his throne solely to make you an offer of his love, has some claims on your gratitude. Permit me then,

beautiful princess, to have the honour of presenting you to my uncle. The king your father will have no sooner given his consent to our marriage, than he will be left master of his kingdom as before."

This declaration of King Beder did not produce the effect which he had expected from it. The princess, at the first view of him, struck with his fine figure, gallant air, and the finished address with which he had accosted her, could not behold him without rising sentiments of partiality; but, as soon she had learned from himself that he had been the cause of the ill-treatment which the king her father had experienced, of the grief which she herself had endured, and of the terrors she had felt with regard to the security of her own person and of the necessity to which she had been reduced, of having recourse to flight, she regarded him as an enemy, with whom she was bound to have no connexion. Whatever disposition, too, she herself might have had to consent to the marriage, yet as she believed one of the strongest objections on the part of her father arose from the origin of King Beder, who was descended from a sovereign of the earth, she was resolved, in a matter so important to the dignity of their house, to submit entirely to his will. She, nevertheless, concealed her resentment from Beder, being anxious to deliver herself from his hands. Making him, therefore, believe that she regarded him with kindness, "You are, then, sir," she replied with all possible courtesy, "son of Queen Gulnare, so celebrated for her extraordinary beauty. It gives me much pleasure to have made the discovery, and I am delighted to see in you a prince so worthy of her. The king my father was very wrong to oppose himself so violently to our union: he will no sooner see you than he will readily consent to render us both happy." Having thus addressed him, she presented her hand in token of friendship.

King Beder now imagined himself at the very summit of human happiness; he extended his hand, and taking that of the princess, bowed forward in order to kiss it respectfully. The princess did not allow him time: "Wretch," said she, driving him away, and spitting in his face for want of water, "quit the human form, and take that of a white bird, with red beak and feet." As soon as she pronounced these words, King Beder, to his infinite mortification and astonishment, was changed into a bird of the form prescribed. "Take it," said she to one of her women, "and convey it to the dry island." This island was nothing but a frightful rock, which produced not a single drop of water.

The woman took the bird; but, in executing the order of the princess Giau-hare, she could not but compassionate the hard fate of King Beder. "It would be a great pity," said she to herself, "that a prince so worthy to live, should die of hunger and thirst. A princess of so kind and gentle a disposition, will probably herself repent having given so cruel an order, as soon as she shall be a little recovered from her present anger. It will be much better that I should carry him to some place where he may die a natural death." She then conveyed him to a well-peopled island, and left him in a pleasant country, planted with every sort of fruit trees, and watered by abundance of streams.

Let us now return to King Saleh. After himself and his people had sought in vain through every part of the palace for the princess Giau-hare, he ordered the king of Samandal to be secured in his own palace under a strong guard, and then, giving the necessary orders for the government of the kingdom during his absence, he returned to the queen his mother, to make her acquainted with what had happened. On his arrival, he immediately inquired after the king his nephew, and learned with the greatest surprise and concern that he had disappeared. "They came, to inform us," said the queen his mother, "of the great danger you were in from the king of Samandal; and, while I was giving orders to send you fresh succour, either to defend you or to avenge your wrongs,

he disappeared. He must have been terrified to hear of the danger you were in, and perhaps was even alarmed for his own safety while he remained with us."

This news gave great affliction to King Saleh, who now repented of his too great facility in submitting to the wishes of King Beder without having previously communicated the affair to Gulnarè. He sent every day in search of him, but notwithstanding all the diligence he could use, no one brought the least information concerning him; the pleasure, therefore, he had experienced in having so far promoted the marriage which he considered as his own work, was changed into the most mortifying concern at an event so disastrous and unexpected. In the mean while, till he should obtain some information, good or bad, he left his kingdom under the administration of the queen his mother, and went to reside over that of the king of Samandal, whom he continued to guard with much vigilance, though with every respect due to so illustrious a personage.

The same day on which King Saleh had departed in order to return to the kingdom of Samandal, Queen Gulnarè arrived at the court of the queen her mother. This princess had suffered little concern on the first day of her son's absence; she readily imagined that the ardour of the chase, as sometimes happened, had carried him on further than he expected; but when she found that he returned not on the next, nor on the following one, she began to feel all those serious alarms which the excess of maternal tenderness could not fail to inspire. These alarms were greatly increased when she learned from the officers who accompanied him, and who had been obliged to return, after a long and fruitless search, that something disastrous must have happened to him and king Saleh; or that they were still in some retreat, which the officers could not possibly discover. They had, they acknowledged, soon found their horses; but with respect to themselves, notwithstanding all the diligence they could use, they could not gain the least information. The queen, having heard the whole of their report, judged it prudent to dissemble, and for the present to conceal her affliction: she ordered them once more to pursue their former route, and to make the strictest inquiry possible. In the mean while, she had determined on the plan she herself would adopt; therefore, without speaking to any one, and having told her women that she wished to be alone, she threw herself into the sea, in order to clear up a suspicion she had formed, that King Saleh had drawn away the king of Persia with him.

This great queen would have been received by her mother with every expression of delight, if she had not suspected, from the first moment she saw her, the occasion of her visit. "My daughter," said she, "I am well assured that I am not the cause of your present visit. You are come to obtain information of the king your son, and unhappily I have none to give you but what will augment your affliction as well as mine. I felt the greatest possible satisfaction when I saw the king of Persia arrive with his uncle; but I no sooner understood that he had departed without knowledge, than I partook very sensibly of the pain you would necessarily suffer." She then gave her an account of the zealous manner in which King Saleh had undertaken in person to solicit the hand of Princess Giauharè, and of what had happened in consequence, to the moment of King Beder's departure. "I have sent after him," added she: "and the king my son, who is just set off to take upon him the government of the kingdom of Samandal, has also used all diligence on his part. Hitherto this has been without success; but let us hope that we shall see him again at a time when we least expect it."

The disconsolate Gulnarè could not at first feed herself on so feeble a hope; she looked upon her dear son as for ever lost, and wept most bitterly, imputing the whole blame to the king her brother. The queen was most urgent to convince her of the necessity she was under to subdue, in some measure, her

affliction. "It is true," said she, "that the king your brother ought not to have spoken to you of this marriage with so little precaution, nor even to have consented to bring away my grandson without your previous assent; but as it is not absolutely certain that the king of Persia has perished, you ought to neglect nothing to preserve his kingdom for him. Do not, then, lose your time, but return immediately to your capital, where your presence is necessary. You will find little difficulty in retaining things in their present tranquil state, provided you give out that the king of Persia has left his dominions only for the purpose of honouring us with a visit."

Arguments of less weight would not have lost their force on Queen Gulnaré; she immediately prepared to follow the advice of her royal mother, of whom she took an affectionate leave, and soon regained the palace of the capital of Persia, before even her absence had been perceived. She immediately despatched some of her people to bring back the officers whom she had sent in search of the king her son, and to inform them that she knew where he was, and that he would return soon. She caused also this report to be spread through the whole city, while, aided by the first minister and the council, she carried on the business of government with precisely the same tranquillity as if King Beder had been present.

To return to Beder, whom the servant of the princess Giauharé had carried and left in an island, as has been already mentioned. He was exceedingly astonished when he found himself alone, and in the form of a bird. He felt so much the more unhappy in his present state as he knew not where he was, nor in what part of the world the kingdom of Persia was situated. But if he had known, or had been sufficiently assured of the strength of his wings to hazard a journey across so many seas, and had been able eventually to regain his kingdom, what would he have derived from his success, but the misery of finding himself oppressed by the same evils he now experienced? No one would have known him to be the king of Persia, or even supposed him to be of the human species! He must have remained an inhabitant of the fields as at present; must have been nourished by the same food as other birds of his kind, and have passed his nights upon a tree.

Some days after the king had remained in this disconsolate state, a peasant, who was very skilful in catching birds, came with his nets to the place where he was, and was much delighted when he perceived so beautiful a bird, of a species, too, quite unknown to him, although he had for many years followed the sport in which he was now engaged. He employed all the address of which he was master, and took his measures so well that they were at length crowned with success. Delighted to find the bird in his possession, which, on account of its beauty and rarity, he esteemed of infinitely more value than the birds he usually caught, he secured it in a cage, and conveyed it to the city. As soon as he arrived at the market, a citizen stopped him, and asked what he would have for the bird?

Instead of replying to this question, the peasant, in his turn, desired to know of the citizen what he intended to do with it in case he bought it? "My good man," replied the citizen, "what can you imagine I should do with it but roast and eat it?" "Upon that plan," replied the peasant, "you will think you have bought it dear, were you to give me only the smallest piece of silver. I value it so high, that I would not part with it, were you even to give me a piece of gold. I am now somewhat advanced in years, but never, since I can remember, have I seen a bird of this kind. I will go and make a present of it to the king: he will know its value better."

Instead of remaining in the market, the peasant took his way to the palace, and on his arrival there, stopped before the royal apartment. The king was

near a window, from whence he could see everything that passed in the court. As soon as he perceived the beautiful bird, he sent one of the officers of his eunuchs with an order to purchase it. The officer came to the peasant, and inquired what he would have for the bird. "If it is for his majesty," replied the peasant, "I entreat that he will allow me to make him a present of it." The officer took the bird to the king, who found it so singularly beautiful that he desired the officer to take ten pieces of gold back to the peasant, who retired perfectly content; after which the bird was put into a magnificent cage, and provided with grain and water in the most costly vessels.

The king, who was then ready to mount his horse for the purpose of hunting, and who had not had sufficient time thoroughly to examine the bird, desired at his return to have it again set before him. An officer brought the cage, which the king opened, when, in order to view the bird more fully, he took it in his hand. Surveying it with much admiration, he inquired of the officer if he had ever seen it eat. "Sire," replied the officer, "your majesty may perceive that the vessel containing its food is still full; I have not observed that it has even touched it." The king then ordered them to give it various kinds of food, that it might choose what it most liked.

As the table was already spread, and they were serving up the dinner when the king gave this order, the bird, as soon as they had brought the dishes, clapping his wings, escaped from the king's hand, and flew upon the table, where he began to peck at the bread and other viands, hopping from dish to dish. The king was so much surprised, that he sent the officer of eunuchs to entreat the queen to come and witness this astonishing sight. The officer disclosed the affair to her majesty in as few words as possible, and the queen came immediately. But as soon as she saw the bird she covered her face with her veil, and wished to retire. The king, astonished at this action, and the more so, as there were only eunuchs in the chamber with some of her women who had followed her, requested to know the reason of this unusual delicacy.

"Sire," replied the queen, "your majesty will not be astonished when you shall learn that this bird is not the creature you suppose, but a man." "Madam," replied the king, still more surprised than before, "you, without doubt, mean to amuse yourself with me: you shall not, however, persuade me that a bird is a man." "God forbid, sire, that I should mock or deceive your majesty; nothing is more true than what I have the honour to tell you; and I assure you, further, that in the object before you, you behold Beder, king of Persia, son of the celebrated Gulnarè, princess of one of the renowned kingdoms of the sea, nephew of Saleh, the reigning monarch, and grandson of Queen Faraschè, the mother of Gulnarè and of Saleh; and, moreover, that it is the princess Giauhare, daughter of the king of Samandal, who has thus metamorphosed him." In order to remove entirely the doubts of his majesty, she related to him how the princess Giauhare had thus avenged herself of the ill-treatment which King Saleh had given to the king of Samandal, her father.

The king had less difficulty in giving credit to everything the queen related to him of this extraordinary history, as he knew her to be more skilled in magic than almost any one the world had ever seen. To her wonderful knowledge of events he had frequently been indebted for such early and important information as had enabled him to counteract the hostile designs of his royal neighbours. Feeling, therefore, compassion for the king of Persia, he entreated the queen, with much importunity, to dissolve the enchantment by the force of which he was retained in so unworthy a form.

The queen most readily gave her consent: "Sire," said she to the king, "will it please your majesty to take the trouble of retiring to your cabinet with the bird, and I will, in a few moments, make him appear before you in his own

royal form, when you will find him highly worthy of your consideration." The bird, who had ceased eating, in order to attend to the conversation of the king and queen, did not give his majesty the trouble of taking him, but passed first into the cabinet, where the queen arrived soon after, having in her hand a vessel full of water. She pronounced over this vessel some words unknown to the king, till the water began to boil; she then immediately took some in her hand, and throwing it upon the bird, "By the virtue of the holy and mysterious words I have just pronounced," said she, "and in the name of the Creator of heaven and earth, who revives the dead, and supports the universe, quit your present form of a bird, and resume that which was given you by the great Author of your existence."

The queen had scarcely finished these words, when, instead of a bird, the king saw before him a young prince, of a very fine and manly figure, with whose commanding air and noble countenance he was much charmed. King Beder immediately prostrated himself before him, returning thanks to God for the great kindness he had just received. Afterward, in rising, he seized the hand of the monarch and kissed it, in order to evince his excess of gratitude, when the king embraced him with every expression of delight, and assured him of the very high satisfaction he felt in seeing him. King Beder was desirous of thanking her majesty, but she had already retired to her apartment. The king then desired that he would join her at table; when they had finished their repast, he further requested to know, for what possible reason the princess Giauharè could have been so inhuman as to transform into a bird so amiable a prince, upon which subject the king of Persia gave him full information. When he had finished, the king, quite indignant at the conduct of the princess, did not refrain from speaking of her in terms of severe censure. "It was commendable," said he, "in the princess of Samandal, not to be insensible to the treatment which the king her father had received; but that she should carry her revenge to so great an excess against a prince who was in no respect to blame, betrays a malignity of temper which nothing can justify or excuse. But let us relinquish this unpleasant subject; and tell me if there be anything in which I can further serve you."

"Sire," replied King Beder, "the obligation I am under to your majesty is so great, that I ought to remain with you during the rest of my life, to give you proof of the gratitude I feel; but, since you put no bounds to your generosity, may I presume to request that you will grant me a vessel to take me back to Persia, where I fear my absence, which has been already too long, may be the occasion of some disorder, and even that the queen my mother, from whom I concealed my departure, may fall an untimely sacrifice to her maternal tenderness, in the painful uncertainty she must now be under with regard to my fate."

The king granted his request with all the kindness imaginable, giving orders that they should, without the least delay, equip one of the best-built and swiftest sailing ships in the whole navy. The vessel was very soon completely rigged, and provided with sailors, soldiers, and every necessary store; as soon as the wind became favourable, King Beder embarked, having taken leave of the king, and thanked him for his numerous favours.

The ship set sail with the wind immediately in its stern, and as it continued in the same favourable point, without any change, for the space of ten days, they had proceeded far in their voyage, when, on the eleventh day from their departure, it blew hard from an adverse quarter, and rapidly increased to a furious storm. The bark was, in consequence, not only driven out of its course, but was so violently tossed about by the fury of the tempest, that all its masts at length gave way; when, being wholly at the mercy of the elements, it struck upon a rock, and was there dashed to pieces.

The greatest part of the crew instantly sunk to the bottom; of the remainder, some, confiding in the strength of their arms, endeavoured to save themselves by swimming, while others trusted to a plank or piece of the wreck. King Beder was amongst the latter, and was carried about by waves and currents, in a long uncertainty of his fate, till he at length perceived that he was near land, and not far from a city of magnificent appearance. He availed himself of all his remaining strength to reach the shore, and at length arrived so near it, that he was able to touch the bottom. He immediately quitted the piece of wood which had rendered him such important service, and advanced further, in order to gain the dry land, when he was astonished to see running towards him, from all quarters, a number of horses, camels, mules, asses, oxen, cows, bulls, and other animals, which lined the shore, and put themselves in a posture to prevent his landing. He had all the difficulty possible to get the better of their opposition, and to procure himself a passage. When he had at length gained his purpose, he availed himself of a situation amongst the rocks, where he was secured from further molestation, till he could a little recover his breath, and dry his clothes in the sun.

When the prince was desirous to advance towards the city, he had again to undergo the same opposition from these animals. They seemed anxious to turn him from his purpose, and to make him comprehend that danger awaited him.

King Beder, however, at length arrived in the city, where he saw a great number of handsome and spacious streets, but was much astonished at not meeting a single inhabitant. So strange a solitude made him suspect that he had been opposed admission, not without reason, by such a number of animals, who had done all in their power to induce him to fly the place. He ventured, however, to proceed; and having observed that a number of shops were open, was led to conclude that the city was not so utterly without people as he had at first imagined. He approached one of these shops, where a variety of fruits, displayed to much advantage, were exposed to sale, and accosted an old man, who was sitting there to give attendance.

The old man, who happened at that moment to be occupied, immediately raised his head, when on seeing before him a youth of commanding aspect, he desired to know, with an air which marked great surprise, from whence he came, and what occasion had brought him there? King Beder informed him in a very few words: when the old man went on to inquire, whether he had met no one in his way? "You," said the king, "are the first person I have seen, and I cannot in the least comprehend how or why so beautiful and magnificent a city as this should be deserted in the manner it appears to be." "Come in; do not stay an instant longer at the door," replied the old man, "lest some evil should befall you. At leisure I will satisfy your curiosity, and tell you the reason why it is necessary that you should take this precaution."

King Beder did not require to be asked twice; he entered and took a seat near that of the old man, who, conceiving from what he had heard of the prince's misfortunes, that he must be in great need of refreshment, presented to him immediately such food as he thought would best restore his strength; and although King Beder had entreated him to explain for what reason he had urged him so earnestly to quit the street, the old man would not say a word till the repast was finished, from the apprehension that what he had to communicate might prevent the king from eating with so much satisfaction as he might otherwise experience. At length, when he saw that he would eat no more: "You ought to return thanks to God," said he, "that you have arrived so far as my house without any unpleasant accident." "How? for what reason?" returned King Beder, much alarmed.

"You must know," replied the old man, "that this city is called the City of

Enchantments, and that it is governed, not by a king, but by a queen, the most beautiful woman in the world, who is, moreover, an enchantress of such remarkable and dangerous powers, that her equal has never been known. You will be convinced of this when I inform you that all the horses, mules, and other animals which you saw on your landing, are so many men, like you and me, whom, by her infernal art, she has thus transformed. Every handsome young man like yourself who approaches the city, is intercepted by some of her vile emissaries, who, with or without their consent, conduct them before the queen; she receives them in the most obliging manner possible, caresses them, regales them with every dainty, lodges them in most magnificent apartments; and endeavouring to persuade them by so many attentions that she is really in love, rarely fails to make herself believed; after which she permits her unhappy dupes to enjoy but for a short time their imagined good fortune: there is not one of them whom, at the end of forty days, she does not change into some beast or bird, as it pleases her fancy. You have mentioned to me the animals you encountered on the shore, who endeavoured to prevent your landing and approach hither. They were unable in any other way to make you comprehend the danger to which you were exposing yourself, and they did all that was in their power to persuade you to return."

This discourse of the old man excited in the mind of the king the most serious concern. "Alas!" he cried, "to what extremity am I reduced by my evil destiny! Scarcely am I delivered from one enchantment, upon which I look back with horror, than I see myself exposed to another much more terrible." The recollection of this circumstance gave him occasion to relate to the old man his history more at length, to inform him of his birth and quality, of his love for the princess of Samandal, and of the cruelty she had shown in transforming him into a bird.

When the prince had proceeded in his narrative to notice his good fortune in having found a queen who had dissolved his enchantment, showing at the same time marks of the greatest distress from the apprehension he entertained of falling into a similar or worse evil, the old man became anxious to appease his fears. "Although," said he, "what I have told you of the sorceress queen and of her cruel proceedings be perfectly true, yet you need not in consequence give way to the great disquietude which seems at present to possess you. I am beloved throughout this whole city, and am not unknown even to the queen herself, who, I may venture to add, has much regard for me. You may esteem it, therefore, a piece of singular good fortune that you have addressed yourself rather to me than to any one else. You are in perfect safety in my house, where I would recommend you, if it be agreeable, to continue. I can give you the most positive assurance, that while you remain under my roof no disaster will happen which will afford you the least occasion to question my good faith; nor need you here be under any restraint whatever."

King Beder thanked the old man for the hospitality he had shown, and for the protection he had extended to him with so much kindness. He sat down at the entrance of the shop, where he no sooner appeared, than his youth and fine person drew upon him the eyes of all that passed; many of whom stopped to compliment the old man upon his having obtained so well-looking a slave, for such they imagined him to be. They appeared at the same time much surprised, as they could not conceive how so handsome a young man had escaped the diligence of the queen. "Do not imagine," replied the old man, "that the person you see is a slave; I am not, as you know, sufficiently rich, or in a condition of life, to assume such importance; the young man is my nephew, the son of a deceased brother, and, as I have no children, I have invited him to come and live with me." They heartily congratulated him on

the satisfaction he must feel at his arrival ; but at the same time could not refrain from expressing their fears that the queen would take him away. "You know her," said they, "as well as we do, and cannot be ignorant of the danger to which you expose yourself, after all the examples you have seen. How extreme will be your grief if she should treat him in the same manner as she has done so many others, whose melancholy fate we are acquainted with."

"I am extremely obliged to you," returned the old man, "for the kind concern you have expressed, and for the interest you take in a matter so near my heart, and I return you my thanks with all the gratitude possible ; I am, however, far from thinking that the queen will do the least unkindness to one on whom she is so frequently bestowing the most signal marks of her favour. Should she hear of the young man's arrival, and be inclined to speak to me on the subject, I cannot but hope and believe, that when she learns that he is my nephew, she will not even think of him more."

The old man was delighted to hear the praises which were bestowed on the king of Persia, for whom he was disposed to feel the same affection as if he had been really his son ; nor did his friendship and good opinion fail to increase every moment of the king's continuance with him, as it gave fresh opportunity for the display of his many virtues. They had been living together about a month, when King Beder, sitting one day, according to custom, at the entrance of the shop, saw the retinue of Queen Labé, for thus was the royal enchantress called, who was approaching the house of the old man with great pomp. King Beder no sooner perceived the guards, who were advancing before her, than he rose and re-entered the shop, to inquire of the old man his host the meaning of all this state. "It is the queen who is going past," he replied ; "but remain where you are, and fear nothing."

The guards of Queen Labé, dressed in a rich purple uniform, and nobly mounted and equipped, marched in four files with their sabres drawn. They were about a thousand in number, and there was not amongst them a single officer who did not salute the old man as he passed before his shop. These were followed by a like number of eunuchs, dressed in brocaded silk, and better mounted than the former, the officers of which paid him the same respect. After these, as many young ladies, all of exquisite and nearly equal beauty, richly dressed and adorned with jewels, proceeded on foot, with a solemn step, having each of them a short pike in her hand, in the midst of whom appeared Queen Labé, seated on a horse covered with the most brilliant diamonds, and with a saddle entirely of gold, and housings of inestimable value. The young ladies also, in passing, saluted the old man ; and the queen, struck by the fine person of King Beder, stopped before the shop. "Abdallah," said she to him, for thus was the old man called, "tell me, I beg, does this beautiful and charming slave belong to you ? Has he been long in your possession ?"

Abdallah, before he replied to the queen, prostrated himself to the earth, and when he rose from this posture of submission and respect : "Madam," said he, "he is my nephew, the son of a brother, who died not long since. Having no children, I consider him as my son, and have brought him hither to be my consolation while I live, and to receive the little property I may leave at my death."

Queen Labé, who had never yet seen any one who could be compared with King Beder, and who had already conceived a very violent passion for him, was thinking, after what she had heard, in what manner to address the old man, so as to prevail with him to give up his nephew. "My good father," returned she, "will you not do me the favour to make me a present of him ? Do not refuse me, I entreat you : I swear by the fire and by the light, I will

make him so great and powerful that he shall enjoy a more exalted fortune than has ever fallen to the lot of any mortal. Could I ever entertain the design of inflicting evil on the whole of the human race, he at least would be one whom I should anxiously preserve from ill. I have the fullest confidence that you will comply with my request, relying more on the friendship which I know you have for me, than on the esteem which I do, and always have entertained for yourself."

"Madam," replied the good Abdallah, "I am infinitely indebted to your majesty for all your goodness to me, and for the honour you wish to confer on my nephew. He is not worthy to approach so great a queen: may it please your majesty to decline your kind intentions in his favour."

"Abdallah," replied the queen, "I had flattered myself that you loved me more than you do; nor did I believe you would have given me so evident a proof of the slight regard you pay to my wishes; but I again swear by the fire, and by the light, and by everything I hold most sacred in my religion, that I will not pass a step farther until I have subdued your opposition. I fully comprehend what it is that occasions your uneasiness; but I give you my solemn promise, that you shall not have the least cause to repent of having obliged me in an affair so important to my happiness."

Old Abdallah was inexpressibly mortified, both on his own account and on that of King Beder, at being thus compelled to yield to the solicitation of the queen. "Madam," he replied, "I should be very sorry to give your majesty the least occasion to imagine that I am wanting in the respect I owe you, or that I am deficient in inclination or zeal to do everything in my power that may contribute to your pleasure. I put an entire reliance on your word, and you will, I doubt not, keep it faithfully. I only entreat that you will not confer on my nephew the high good-fortune you intend him, till you shall again pass this way." "That, then, will be to-morrow," replied the queen, who bowed while she was speaking these words, to express the obligation she was under. She then resumed her way to the palace.

When Queen Labé with all her pompous retinue had passed by: "My son," said the good Abdallah to King Beder (for thus he was accustomed to address the king, that he might not be led inadvertently, when speaking of him in public, to betray who he was), "I was not able to refuse the queen what she solicited with so much earnestness, as you yourself have witnessed, without incurring the risk of her displeasure, and of being exposed in consequence to some open or secret violence, which, by the aid of magic, she would find means of employing; when, probably to gratify her spirit of revenge against me as well as you, she would bring upon you some evil more dreadfully cruel than any she has yet inflicted on those unhappy sufferers of whom I have informed you. I have some reason to believe from the particular regard she has for me, that she will not fail of her promise of using you well; that I am not wholly indifferent to her you must have yourself remarked from the conduct of her whole court, who were all forward to pay me honours. She would indeed be the most infamous of beings if she deceived me; she shall not, however, deceive me with impunity; I shall find a way of being revenged."

These assurances appeared too vague to have much effect in tranquillising the mind of King Beder. "After all that you have told me of the wicked actions of this queen," he replied, "I wish not to conceal from you how very apprehensive I am of approaching her. I might, perhaps, disregard all that you have said to me, and suffer myself to be dazzled by that splendid magnificence with which she is surrounded, did I not already know by experience what it is to be at the mercy of a magician. The condition to which I was

reduced through enchantment by the princess Giauhare, and from which it seems I am delivered only to be brought again almost instantly into a similar state, makes me regard my fate with horror." Tears prevented his saying more, and expressed by their abundance his extreme concern at the fatal necessity he was under of being delivered up to the power of Queen Labé.

"My son," said old Abdallah, "do not afflict yourself. I will confess to you, that one is not justified in putting any great faith in the promises, or even the oaths of so wicked a queen. I wish you, however, to know that she is not able to extend the least authority over me; she is not ignorant of this, and it is for this reason more than from any real affection, that she confers on me so many marks of esteem. I shall know how to prevent her doing you the least injury, should she be so perfidious as to harbour the intention: you may trust to me, and provided you follow exactly the advice I shall give you before that I resign you to her, you may rest fully satisfied that she will have no more power over you than she has over me."

The sorceress queen did not fail the next day to pass by the shop of Abdallah with the same pomp she had displayed on the preceding day, and the old man attended her with the greatest respect. "My good father," said she to him when she stopped, "you may judge of the impatience I feel to have the pleasure of your nephew's company, by my punctuality in waiting upon you to claim the performance of your promise. I know that you are a man of your word, and I cannot believe that you have changed your intention."

Abdallah, who had prostrated himself to the earth as soon as he saw the queen approaching, rose when she ceased speaking; and, as he was anxious that no one should hear what he had to say to her, advanced respectfully up to her horse's head, and addressed her in a low tone of voice: "Most potent queen," said he, "I am persuaded that your majesty will not take amiss the repugnance I yesterday expressed at parting with my nephew; you will readily comprehend the motive which influenced me. To-day I am all submission to your pleasure, and resign him to your majesty with perfect good-will; but I entreat you to have the goodness to lay aside all the secrets of the magic art which you possess in so great a degree. I look upon my nephew as if he were my son, and your majesty would sink me in the deepest despair, if you were to treat him in any way different from what I am induced to hope from the gracious promises you have given me."

"Promises which I most willingly repeat," replied the queen; "and I again assure you by the same oath I took yesterday, that both you and he will have abundant reason to be satisfied. I see very well," added she, "that you do not sufficiently know me; you have seen me at present only in a mask; but if I find your nephew worthy of my friendship, I shall be happy to convince you that I am not unworthy of his." Having ceased speaking, she permitted King Beder, who had attended with old Abdallah, to survey her incomparable beauty, with which, however, he was but little affected. "It is not," said he to himself, "enough to be handsome: it is requisite that the conduct should be as pure as the features are beautiful."

While King Beder was making these reflections, with his eyes fixed upon the queen, the venerable Abdallah turned towards him, and having taken him by the hand, presented him to her majesty: "Madam," said he, "I presume to entreat once more that you will not forget he is my nephew; and that you will allow him sometimes to come and see me." The queen promised compliance; and to assure him of her gratitude, made him a present of a purse, which she had ordered to be brought with her, containing a thousand pieces of gold. He at first excused himself from receiving it, but she insisted so earnestly that he should accept it, that he could no longer refuse. She had ordered, whom,

as richly caparisoned as her own, to be brought for the king of Persia. It was presented to him, and while he was putting his foot in the stirrup: "I forgot," said the queen to Abdallah, "to inquire of you your nephew's name." As soon as he had answered that he was called Beder, "This is a strange mistake," said she; "he certainly ought to have been named Schems" (*i.e.* instead of being called the "full moon," he ought to be called "the sun").

As soon as King Beder had mounted the horse provided for him, he was going to take his place behind the queen, but she obliged him to advance on her left hand, and desired that he would keep by her side; she then directed her eyes towards Abdallah, and having made him a courteous inclination of her head, proceeded on her route.

King Beder, instead of remarking in the countenance of the people a certain satisfaction, accompanied with respect, at the sight of their sovereign, perceived, on the contrary, that they beheld her with scorn; and even that many of them uttered the severest imprecations against her. "The sorceress," said one, "has found a new subject on which to exercise her malice: will Heaven never deliver the world from her tyranny?" "Unhappy stranger," cried another, "you are completely deceived, if you imagine that your good fortune will be of long continuance; you are elevated so high, only that your fall may be more destructive." These discourses did not fail to assure the king that Abdallah had painted in true colours the character of the queen; but as he could no longer depend upon his venerable friend to extricate him from his danger, he resigned himself to Providence, trusting wholly to the powers above to decide on his fate.

The sorceress queen arrived at her palace, and having alighted from her horse, obliged King Beder to give her his hand, with whom, accompanied by her women and the officers of her eunuchs, she entered her splendid mansion. She herself showed him all the apartments, which were decorated with massive gold and precious stones, and contained furniture of wonderful magnificence. When she had conducted him into her cabinet, she proceeded with him to a balcony, from whence she directed his attention to a garden of enchanting beauty. King Beder praised everything he saw with much intelligent discrimination, but at the same time in such terms as gave her no room to suspect that he was not really the nephew of Abdallah. They conversed on a variety of indifferent subjects, till some attendant came to announce to her majesty that dinner was ready.

The queen and King Beder immediately rose and proceeded to the dining-room; the table and all the dishes were of solid gold. They began to eat, but drank nothing till just before the dessert was served, when the queen ordered her cup to be filled with some excellent wine, and having drank it off to the health of King Beder, she, still holding it in her hand, desired it might be again filled, and presented it to the king, who received it with every mark of respect, and by a very low inclination of his head, he humbly expressed that he would drink her health in return.

About this time, ten females belonging to the queen entered, with musical instruments, with which, accompanying their voices, they formed a most agreeable concert: the united charms of wine and music were continued during a great part of the night. At length, in consequence of their repeated libations, they began both of them to be considerably heated; so much so, that King Beder forgot insensibly that the queen was a magician, and considered her only as the most beautiful woman in the world. As soon as the queen perceived that she had wrought him up to the point she wished, she made a sign to her eunuchs and women to retire. They obeyed, when King Beder and the queen were left alone. The queen then said to King Beder, "I have now what it is to be a sorceress."

The next day, as soon as they rose, the queen and King Beder went to the bath; upon the king's quitting it, the women who went there to wait upon him, presented him with linen of a snowy whiteness, and with a dress of unequalled magnificence. The queen also put on a dress much more splendid than that she wore the day before, and having rejoined the king, they went together to her apartment, where they partook of an excellent repast; after which they passed the day most agreeably, sometimes sauntering in the garden, at other times occupying themselves in some interesting amusement.

It was in this manner that Queen Labè amused and regaled King Beder for the space of forty days, according to her usual mode of treating her lovers. On the night of the fortieth, while they were in bed together, and when she believed King Beder was asleep, she rose without making any noise. The king, who happened to be awake, imagining that something extraordinary was going forward, feigned himself asleep, and became very attentive to her proceedings. As soon as she had risen, she opened a casket, from whence she drew a box full of yellow powder. She took some of this powder, and with it made a train across the chamber, which was instantly changed into a stream of transparent water, to the great astonishment of King Beder. He even trembled with fear, and became more anxious than ever to retain the appearance of a person sleeping, that the queen might not discover that he was awake.

Queen Labè took some of the water of this stream in a vessel, and poured it into a basin in which there was some flour; of these she made a paste, in which she continued to knead for a long time. She afterwards added to it certain drugs taken from different boxes, and made of the whole a cake, which she put into a covered baking-pan. As it had been one of her first cares to provide a good fire, she drew from it some of the burning coals, on which she placed the baking-pan, and while the cake was preparing, returned the vessels and boxes that had been used, to their places. The stream which was flowing in the middle of the chamber, at certain words she pronounced, instantly disappeared. When the cake was finished, she removed it from the coals and conveyed it to a closet, and then returned to her bed, where King Beder had so well counterfeited sleep, that she had not the least suspicion of his being acquainted with anything that had passed.

The king, absorbed in luxury and pleasure, had forgotten the good old Abdallah, his host, from the time he quitted him; he now called him to remembrance, and began to think, after what he had seen of Queen Labè's conduct during the night, that he had need of his counsel. As soon as he rose, he expressed to the queen a desire to visit him, and entreated her to give him permission. "What! my dear Beder," replied the queen, "are you already tired, I will not say of continuing in this superb palace, where you might find, I should imagine, so many delights; but of the company of a queen who loves you so passionately, of which she has given you such abundant proofs?"

"Great queen," replied Beder, "how can I be tired of the many and great favours which your majesty has had the goodness to heap upon me? Far from it, madam: I ask leave to pay this visit rather to give an account to my uncle of the infinite obligations I owe your majesty, than to convince him that he is not forgotten. I will not, however, deny that the latter motive has its weight; as I know that he loves me with the greatest tenderness, and as forty days have elapsed since he has seen me, I do not wish to give him occasion to think, by deferring any longer to visit him, that I am insensible to his kindness." "Go," replied the queen, "I wish you to do so, but you will not be long ere you return, if you remember that I am not able to live without you." She then ordered him a horse richly caparisoned, on which he departed.

The good Abdallah was delighted to behold King Beder again, whom,

without any regard to his quality, he tenderly embraced. The king embraced him in return, so that no one could possibly suspect that he was not the old man's nephew. When they were seated, "Well," said Abdallah to the king, "how do you find yourself? and how do you get on with that faithless woman, that sorceress?"

"Hitherto," replied King Beder, "I have the satisfaction to tell you she has shown for me all the regard imaginable, and has endeavoured by every means, and with all the earnestness possible, to persuade me that she is entirely devoted to me. I have, however, this last night observed a thing which leads me to suspect that the whole of her conduct has been dictated by profound dissimulation." He then related to Abdallah how, and with what circumstances, he had seen her prepare the cake, and added in conclusion, "till this time, I will confess, I had nearly forgotten you, and all the cautions you gave me on the subject of her malice; but this strange action made me fear that she would violate the promises she had given you, and the oath so solemnly taken."

"You are not deceived," replied old Abdallah with a smile, which sufficiently expressed that he himself had never imagined that she would pursue a different conduct; "nothing will ever produce amendment in this perfidious woman; but fear nothing, I know a way to make the evil which she intends to inflict upon you, recoil on herself. The suspicion you have conceived was extremely fortunate and well-timed, and you could not possibly do better than have recourse to me. As she does not retain her lovers more than forty days, and instead of dismissing them in a handsome manner, changes them into so many animals, with which she furnishes her forests, parks, and the country in general, I yesterday took some necessary measures to prevent her serving you in the same manner. The earth has too long groaned with this monster: it is high time that she should meet the fate she deserves."

Abdallah, on concluding these words, put into the hands of King Beder two cakes, which he desired him to take care of, in order to use in the way he was going to point out. "You have told me," continued he, "that the sorceress has this very night prepared a cake; be assured it is that you may eat of it; but take especial care not to taste it; you must, however, take some when she offers it, but instead of putting it in your mouth, take, without her perceiving it, one of those which I have given you, and eat in place of it. As soon as she shall believe that you have swallowed some of her cake, she will endeavour to transform you into some animal, and failing in her design, will attempt to give the affair a turn of pleasantry, as if she had only done it in sport and to put you in fear, while she will in her heart be exceedingly chagrined, and will impute her failure to some defect in the composition of her cake. With respect to the cake you will have remaining, you must make her a present of it, and press her to eat it; this she will do, to remove, by a seeming reliance on you, such suspicions as she will naturally expect you to entertain, after the cause she will have given you to abate of your confidence in her. When she shall have eaten some of it, take a little water in the hollow of your hand, and throwing it in her face, address her in these words: 'Quit your present form, and take that of—,' adding the name of any animal you please. When you have proceeded thus far, come to me with the animal, and I will instruct you in what it will be further necessary for you to do."

King Beder signified to the old man, in the most expressive terms, how much he felt obliged to him for the interest he took in his behalf, and for his kind endeavours to protect him from the snares of so wicked and cruel a magician. They continued in conversation for a short time, after which King Beder quitted him and returned to the palace. On his arrival he was informed that Queen Labè was waiting for him in the garden with the greatest impatience. He went

to seek her; as soon as she saw him she approached with extreme eagerness: "My dear Beder," said she, "nothing is more true than what has been often asserted, that it is the absence alone of a beloved object that enables one to know the extent and force of one's passion. I have had no enjoyment while you ceased to be present to my view; it appears to me, that even years rolled tediously by since I saw you last; if you had deferred your return any longer, I should have come to seek you myself."

"Madam," replied King Beder, "I can assure your majesty that my impatience to return has been extreme; but I could not refuse some minutes' conversation to an uncle who loves me, and who had not seen me for so long a time. He wished me to stay, but I have torn myself from his tenderness, to come where love invites, and have been content with a single cake, which I have brought away from a collation he had prepared on my account." King Beder had wrapped up one of the two cakes in a clean handkerchief, which, when he had unfolded, he presented to the queen, and added, "This is the cake, madam; I entreat that you will partake of it."

"I accept it," said the queen, "with all my heart, and shall eat of it with pleasure, both for your sake and that of my good friend, your uncle; but I wish first that you will oblige me by eating of this, which I have made in your absence." "Beautiful queen," said King Beder, receiving it with every mark of respect, "from hands such as your majesty's, nothing can come but what is excellent; I am unable to express the gratitude I feel for the favour you do me."

King Beder very adroitly substituted in the room of the cake the queen had produced, the other he had received from Abdallah, of which he broke off a piece and conveyed it to his mouth. "Ah, queen!" he exclaimed while eating it, "I have never tasted anything so exquisite." As they were at the time near a fountain that was playing before them, the sorceress, who perceived that he had swallowed the piece, and was proceeding to eat more, took some water in the hollow of her hand, and throwing it in his face: "Wretch," said she, "quit your present form of a man, and take that of a despicable, lean, halting, one-eyed horse."

These words produced no effect, to the great astonishment of the sorceress, who saw before her King Beder remaining in the same state, except that he gave marks of extreme fear. The colour flew into her cheeks from disappointment; when, however, she perceived that she had failed in her purpose, "My dear Beder," said she, "recover yourself; I had no intention of doing you evil; what I have just done, which seems to have alarmed you, was only to see how you would be affected. Judge for yourself, whether I should not be the most abandoned and execrable of women if I could be guilty of so base an action; I do not say after the oaths I have taken, but after the proofs of love I have given you."

"Most potent queen," replied King Beder, "however persuaded I may be, that your majesty has no intention but to divert yourself, I cannot nevertheless wholly guard myself from surprise. How, indeed, is it possible to hear, without emotion, words, that seem capable of effecting so strange a metamorphose? But, madam, let us have done with the subject, and since I have eaten of your cake, do me the favour now to taste of mine."

Queen Labè, who had no better way of justifying herself than by giving this mark of her confidence in the king of Persia, broke off a small piece of the cake and ate it. The instant she had swallowed it, she appeared exceedingly troubled, and became, as it were, immoveable. King Beder lost not a moment; he took some water from the same fountain, and throwing it in her face: "Abominable enchantress," he exclaimed, "depart from your present form, and be changed into that of a mare."

At the same instant Queen Labè became transformed into a very handsome mare; and so great was her confusion and sorrow at seeing herself thus metamorphosed, that she shed abundance of tears. She held down her head, even to the feet of King Beder, as if to move him with compassion; but even if he had been disposed to relent, it was not in his power to repair the evil he had done. He led the mare to the stable of the palace, where he put her into the hands of a groom, to saddle and bridle her; but of all the bridles which the groom tried, not one was found that would suit her. He then ordered two horses to be got ready, one for himself and one for the groom, whom he commanded to follow him to the house of Abdallah, leading the mare in hand.

Abdallah perceived at a distance the approach of King Beder and the mare, and doubted not but that he had done as he had recommended him. "Cursed sorceress," said he to himself at the same time, with much pleasure, "Heaven at length has chastised you as you deserve." King Beder alighted immediately on his arrival, and entered into the shop of Abdallah, whom he cordially embraced, thanking him for the many important services he had rendered him. He related to him in what manner everything had passed, and observed to him that he could find no bridle proper for the mare. Abdallah, who had them for horses of every sort, bridled the mare himself; and as soon as King Beder had sent away the groom with the two horses: "Sire," said he, "you have no occasion to stop any longer in this place, mount your mare, and return to your kingdom. The only thing I have to recommend you is, that in case you are disposed to part with your mare, you take especial care to give her up with the bridle on her." King Beder promised that he would not forget, and after they had bid each other adieu, he departed.

The young king of Persia was no sooner out of the city, than, overcome with joy, at having escaped so great a danger, and that the sorceress was in his power, he became negligent, not reflecting that he had still need of circumspection. Three days after his departure he arrived at a large city. In passing through the suburbs he was met by an old man of respectable appearance, who was going on foot to his house of retirement in the country. "Sir," says the old man, addressing him, "may I ask from whence you come?" The king stopped to reply, and while the old man went on to ask more questions, an elderly woman approached, who likewise, when she came up to them, stopped also, and looking upon the mare, began to weep bitterly.

King Beder and the old man ceased their conversation, in order to observe the woman, when King Beder asked her what was the occasion of her grief. "Sir," said she, "your mare so perfectly resembles one lately belonging to my son, and which, for his sake, I yet regret, that I should believe her to be the very same were his still alive. Sell her to me, I entreat you; I will pay you whatever you ask, and think myself under great obligation to you."

"My good mother," replied King Beder, "I am very sorry it is not in my power to grant your request, but my mare is not to be sold." "Ah! sir," exclaimed the old woman, "I beseech you in the name of God not to refuse me; both I and my son shall die with grief if you deny us this favour." "My good mother," replied King Beder, "I should agree to it very willingly, if I had the intention of parting with so good a mare; but even if this were the case, I do not believe that you would choose to give a thousand pieces of gold, for I certainly should not value her at less." "Why not give it?" said the old woman; "you have only to agree to the sale, I am ready at this moment to pay the money."

King Beder, observing that the old woman was dressed very meanly, did not imagine that she could be in circumstances to raise so considerable a sum. To prove, therefore, if she could keep to the bargain: "Give the money," said he, "and the mare is yours." Immediately the old woman untied a purse, which was fastened round her waist, and presenting it to him: "Take the trouble to dismount," said she, "that we may see whether this contains the sum required. If it does not, I shall soon be able to provide the rest; my house is not far off."

The astonishment of King Beder, when he saw the purse, was very great: "My good mother," said he, "do not you see, that in what I have been saying I have merely meant to joke; I repeat it to you that my mare is not to be sold."

The old man, who had witnessed the whole conversation, then put in his words: "My son," said he to King Beder, "it is necessary that you should be made acquainted with a matter of which I perceive you are ignorant; it is not permitted in this city to use any kind of falsehood whatever, under pain of death. It is indispensably requisite, therefore, that you should take this good woman's money, and give up your mare, since she has offered you the price you asked. You had better do the thing without bustle than expose yourself to the evil which may otherwise arise from your refusal."

The king, much afflicted at having involved himself thus inconsiderately in so disagreeable an affair, descended from his mare with deep regret.

The old woman was ready in an instant to seize hold of the bridle and strip it off; she was, if possible, more alert in possessing herself of some water from a stream that flowed in the middle of the street; and taking some in her hand, she threw it on the mare, pronouncing at the same time these words: "My daughter, quit this form, which does not belong to you, and reassume your own." The change was made in an instant, and King Beder, who fainted away as soon as Queen Labè again appeared before him, would have fallen to the ground if the old man had not supported him.

The old woman, who was the mother of Queen Labè, and who had instructed her in all the secrets of magic, had no sooner embraced her daughter in the fulness of her joy, than she brought before them, by whistling, a Genius of hideous appearance, and of a figure and size truly gigantic. The Genius took King Beder immediately upon one arm, while he embraced the old woman and the sorceress queen with the other, and in a few moments transported them to the palace of Queen Labè, in the City of Enchantments.

The queen, when arrived at her palace, began to reproach King Beder with the air of a fury, "Ungrateful wretch," said she, "is it thus that your unworthy uncle and you have given proofs of your gratitude, after all that I have done for you. I will reward you both as you deserve." She said no more, but taking some water in her hand, and throwing it upon his face: "Quit your present form," said she, "and take that of a filthy owl." The change instantly took place, when she commanded one of her women to confine the hateful creature in a cage, and to give it nothing to eat or drink.

The woman took the cage; but without regarding the commands of the queen, placed in it both food and water; being moreover a friend of old Abdallah, she sent secretly to inform him of the queen's conduct in regard to his nephew, and of her intention to destroy them both, in order that he might use the necessary precautions, and provide for his own safety.

Abdallah saw immediately that it was no longer time to keep any terms with Queen Labè. He had only to whistle in a particular manner, and immediately an enormous Genius with four wings appeared before him, and desired to know for what purpose he was called: "Lightning," said he, for thus was

the Genius named, "it is our present business to preserve the life of King Beder, the son of Queen Gulnarè. Go to the palace of the sorceress, and transport from thence instantly to the capital of Persia that compassionate woman, to whom she has given charge of the cage, in order that she may inform Queen Gulnarè of the danger to which her son is exposed, and of the necessity there is to afford him assistance. Take care not to alarm her in presenting yourself before her, and tell her from me what I wish her to do."

Lightning disappeared, and in the same instant arrived at the palace of the sorceress. He gave the necessary instructions to the woman, and conveying her aloft in air, transported her to the capital of Persia, where he placed her upon a terraced roof, which communicated with the apartment of Queen Gulnarè. The woman descended the staircase which led to this apartment, where she found Queen Gulnarè, and Queen Farachè her mother, conversing upon the common subject of their affliction. She saluted them with most profound reverence, and then gave such an account of King Beder as made them instantly perceive the necessity he was under of receiving immediate succour.

Queen Gulnarè was so much transported with joy at the news she heard, that she rose from the place where she was sitting, and cordially embraced the worthy messenger, to express how much she was obliged by the service she had received from her. Immediately after this she left her apartment, and commanded the trumpets, drums, and other instruments of the palace, to be sounded, to announce to the whole city that the king of Persia would soon arrive. She returned, and found King Saleh her brother, whom Queen Farachè had already brought there by means of a particular fumigation. "Brother," said she to him, "the king your nephew, my dear son, is in the City of Enchantments, under the power of Queen Labè. It is your business and mine to go and deliver him; there is no time to be lost."

King Saleh assembled a powerful army from his marine dominions, which soon arose from the sea. He called also to his assistance the Genii, his allies, who appeared with another army more numerous than his own. When they were both joined, he put himself at the head, with Queen Farachè, Queen Gulnarè, and the princesses, who were desirous to partake of the action. They mounted in the air, and very soon descended on the palace in the City of Enchantments, where the sorceress queen, her mother, and all the worshippers of fire, were destroyed in the twinkling of an eye.

Queen Gulnarè had ordered that the woman of Queen Labè, who had arrived with the information of her son's calamitous change and imprisonment, should attend her; and she gave her a strict charge, that in the midst of the battle and confusion, she should have no object whatever in view but to secure the cage and bring it to her. This order was faithfully executed. The queen opened the cage herself, and drew thence the owl, on whom she threw some water which she had commanded to be brought: "My dear son," said she, "quit this strange form, and reassume your natural figure of a man."

In the same moment the owl ceased to appear, and the queen saw before her King Beder, her son, whom she embraced immediately with an excess of delight. What she was unable to say by words, in a transport which overcame her, was expressed by abundance of tears. She could not resolve to quit him; and it was necessary that Queen Farachè should tear him from her. When these ladies could bear to part with him, he was embraced by the king his uncle, and by the princesses his relations.

The first care of Queen Gulnarè was to make inquiry after old Abdallah, to whom she was indebted for the king of Persia's restoration. As soon as he was conducted to her: "The obligation I am under to you," said she, "is so great,

that there is nothing I am not ready to do, to express my gratitude ; tell me how I can serve you most to your satisfaction, and be assured of my compliance." "Great queen," he replied, "if the lady whom I sent to your majesty will freely and willingly consent to accept in marriage him who now offers himself to her, and if the king of Persia will permit me to remain at his court, I will with my whole heart devote the remainder of my life to his service. Queen Gulnaré immediately turned towards the lady, whose modest blushes and embarrassed demeanour fully expressed how little repugnance she felt at the proposal, and joined their hands together, while she and the king of Persia both assured them that it should be their united care to promote their welfare.

This marriage gave the king of Persia an opportunity to enlarge on the subject ; addressing himself, therefore, to the queen, his mother, "Madam," said he, smiling, "I am delighted with the marriage you have just made ; there is, however, another which demands your attention." Queen Gulnaré did not immediately comprehend what marriage he was speaking of ; but having reflected for a moment, and penetrated the full meaning of his speech : "It is," said she, "your own of which you are speaking ; I consent to it most willingly." She immediately addressed herself to the marine subjects of the king her brother, and to the Genii, who were present. "Go," said she, "and examine all the palaces of the sea and of the earth, and bring us information of the most beautiful princess, and the most worthy of the king my son, that you can anywhere find."

"Madam," replied King Beder, "it will be useless to take this trouble. You are, without doubt, already informed, that I have given my heart to the princess of Samandal, upon the simple statement of her beauty : I have seen her, and do not repent of the present I have made. Indeed, neither upon the earth, nor under the sea, can there possibly exist a princess who deserves to be put in comparison with her. It is true, that upon the declaration I made of myself, and my passion, she behaved to me in a way that would have extinguished the flame of a love less ardent than mine. She was, however, not to be blamed ; she could not, without betraying her filial duty, and the honour of her family, treat me with less rigour, after having discovered that I, however innocently, was the cause of the king her father's imprisonment. It may be, that by this time the king of Samandal has altered his sentiments, and that the princess will no longer refuse me her heart and hand, when she shall have obtained the sanction of her royal parent."

"My son," replied Gulnaré, "if there be in the world no one but the princess Giauharé who can make you happy, it is not my intention to oppose your union ; if, indeed, it can be effected. The king your uncle has only to bring the king of Samandal hither, and we shall soon learn if it remains as impossible to treat with him as formerly.

With whatever strictness the king of Samandal had been guarded during his captivity by King Saleh's orders, he had all the time been treated with so much attention, that his haughty spirit became much subdued, and he condescended to live on easy terms with the officers who guarded him. King Saleh ordered a chafing-dish full of coals to be brought him, upon which he threw a certain composition, pronouncing at the same time some mysterious words. As soon as the smoke began to ascend, the whole palace trembled, when immediately appeared the king of Samandal with the officers of King Saleh, who attended him. The king of Persia threw himself instantly at his feet, and remained with his knee upon the ground : "Sire," said he, "it is no longer King Saleh who solicits of your majesty to honour the king of Persia with your alliance : it is the king of Persia himself who now entreats you to grant so great a favour ;

I cannot believe that you wish to be the death of a king, who can exist no longer, if denied the possession of the amiable Princess Giauharè."

The king of Samandal no longer suffered the king of Persia to remain at his feet. He embraced him, and compelled him to arise. "Sire," said he, "I should be extremely concerned to contribute in the least to the death of so worthy a monarch. If it be true, that a life so precious can only be preserved in union with my daughter, live; rise, she is yours. She has always been perfectly obedient to my will, and I do not expect that she will now oppose me." He then charged one of his own officers, who, by King Saleh's desire, had remained about his person, to go in search of the princess Giauharè, and to bring her to them instantly.

This princess had constantly remained on the island where the king of Persia had met with her. The officer found her there, and was soon seen to return, accompanied by her and her women. The king of Samandal embraced the princess: "My daughter," said he, "I have given you a husband. The king of Persia, whom you see before you, is the most accomplished monarch that this day exists in the whole universe; the preference he gives you above all other princesses obliges both you and me to make him every return of gratitude."

"Sire," replied the princess Giauharè, "your majesty knows that I have never failed in the obedience I owe to all your commands; I am equally ready to comply in the present instance; and only hope that the king of Persia will forget the ill-treatment he has received from me: he is, I believe, sufficiently equitable to impute it to its real cause, the necessity of my duty."

The nuptials were celebrated in the palace of the City of Enchantments with so much the greater pomp, as all the lovers of the sorceress queen, who had had regained their original form from the moment of her death, and who were come to return their thanks to the king of Persia, Queen Gulnarè, and King Saleh, attended on the occasion. They were all sons of kings, or persons of very high quality.

After this, King Saleh conducted the king of Samandal back to his own dominions, and reinstated him in the full possession of his kingdom. The king of Persia, having attained the summit of his wishes, returned to the capital of Persia, accompanied by Queen Gulnarè, Queen Farachè, and the princesses; the latter, with Queen Farachè, remained there until King Saleh rejoined them, and then reconducted them to his dominions under the sea.

THE HISTORY OF GANEM, SON OF ABOU AIBOU, THE SLAVE OF LOVE.

SIRE (said Scheherazadè, to the sultan of the Indies), there lived formerly at Damascus a merchant, who, by his industry and attention to business, had amassed a large fortune, on which he lived with much respectability. Abou Aibou, for that was his name, had a son and a daughter. The son was originally called Ganem, but afterwards acquired the name of the Slave of Love. He was very handsome, and his understanding, which was naturally good, had been cultivated by the best masters, whom his father had been very anxious to provide. The daughter was called Alcolomb, that is, subduer of hearts, because she was so very beautiful, that all who saw her became enamoured of her charms.

Abou Aibou died, and left immense riches. A hundred bales of brocade and other rich silks, which were found in his warehouse, made but a small part

of them. These bales were all ready packed, and upon each of them was written in large characters, "For Bagdad."

At that time Mohammed, surnamed Zinebi, the son of Soliman, reigned at Damascus, the capital of Syria. His relation Haroun Alraschid, who resided at Bagdad, had bestowed upon him this tributary kingdom.

A short time after the death of Abou Aïbou, Ganem was conversing with his mother on the affairs of their family, when, mention being made of the goods which were in the warehouse, he asked her what was the meaning of the writing, which he observed on every bale. "My son," replied his mother, "your father, being accustomed to travel into various provinces, used, before his departure, to write upon each bale the name of the place to which he proposed to go. He had arranged everything for his journey to Bagdad, and was ready to set off, when death—" She was unable to proceed; the lively remembrance of the loss she had sustained would not permit her to utter another word, and she shed a torrent of tears.

Ganem could not see his mother so much affected without feeling very acutely himself. They remained silent for some minutes; but at length Ganem, recovering himself, addressed his mother, as soon as he saw her in a condition to attend to him, in the following words: "Since my father destined this merchandise for Bagdad, and has not been permitted to execute his design, I will prepare to take the journey.—I think indeed I ought to hasten my departure as much as possible, lest the goods should take harm in the state in which they now are, or we should lose the opportunity of disposing of them to advantage."

The widow of Abou Aïbou, who tenderly loved her son, was much alarmed at this resolution. "My son," answered she, "I cannot but applaud you for wishing to imitate your father; but think how young you are, how inexperienced, and how entirely unaccustomed to the fatigue of long journeys. Would you besides abandon me, and add a new affliction to that with which I am already overwhelmed? Is it not better to dispose of these goods to the merchants of Damascus, and content ourselves with a moderate profit, than to expose yourself to so many dangers?"

She endeavoured in vain to oppose Ganem's design; he was too eager in the prosecution of his scheme to attend to her arguments. The desire of travelling, and of improving his mind by a more extensive knowledge of the world, urged him to depart, and prevailed over the remonstrances, prayers, and even tears of his mother. He went to the market where slaves were sold, and bought such as he thought suited to his purpose; hired a hundred camels; and being provided with everything necessary, set off with five or six merchants of Damascus who were going to trade at Bagdad.

These merchants, followed by their slaves, and accompanied by several other travellers, made up so large a caravan, that they had nothing to fear from the Bedouins—those wandering Arabs, whose custom it is to scour the country, attacking and pillaging all the caravans that are not strong enough to resist their assaults. They had then nothing to fear but the fatigues incident to a long journey, which were soon forgotten, when they came in sight of the city of Bagdad.

They alighted at the most magnificent and best-frequented khan of the city; but Ganem, who wished to be lodged more privately and commodiously, did not make any long stay there. He satisfied himself with leaving his merchandise in a place of safety, and then hired, in the neighbourhood, an excellent house, richly furnished; having the most delightful garden that can be imagined, abounding in beautiful groves and fountains.

Some days after this young merchant had established himself in his house,

and had recovered from the fatigue of his journey, he dressed himself very handsomely, in order to attend the public place, where the merchants assemble to buy and sell their goods. He was followed by a slave who carried a parcel, containing several pieces of fine stuffs and linens.

The merchants received Ganem with much civility; and their chief, or syndic, to whom he first addressed himself, bought his whole parcel according to the several prices marked on the tickets, which were fastened respectively to each piece. Ganem continued this traffic with so much success, that he sold every day whatever merchandise he produced.

One bale only remained, which he had ordered to be taken out of the warehouse, and brought to his own home, previous to his attending the market; but when he arrived there, he found all the shops shut. This appeared to him very extraordinary. He inquired the cause, and was told that one of the principal merchants, who was not unknown to him, was dead; and that all the fraternity, according to custom, were gone to attend his funeral.

Ganem took pains to inform himself of the mosque where prayers were to be offered, and whence the corpse was to be carried to the place of interment. Having gained the information he wished, he sent away his slave with the merchandise, and proceeded towards the mosque. He arrived there before the prayers were finished, which were performing in a room hung with black satin. The corpse was soon after taken up, and was followed by all the relations, accompanied by the merchants and Ganem, to the burying-place, which was at a considerable distance from the city; it was a stone edifice, in the form of a dome, destined to receive the bodies of the family deceased; and as it was small, tents had been erected round it, that the company might be sheltered during the ceremony. The tomb being opened, the corpse was placed in it, after which it was again closed. Then the iman and the other ministers of the mosque, sitting in a circle upon carpets in the principal tent, recited the rest of the prayers. They also read those chapters of the Koran which were appointed for the burial of the dead, while the relations and merchants, following the example of the ministers, sat in a circle behind.

It was almost night before all the ceremonies were finished. Ganem, who had not expected they would last so long a time, began to be uneasy, and his uneasiness increased, when he saw them serve a repast in honour of the deceased according to the custom of Bagdad. He was told that the tents had been pitched not only to guard against the heat of the sun, but as a protection also from the damp of the night, as they were not to return to the city till the next morning. This account alarmed him. "I am a stranger," said he to himself, "and am accounted rich; thieves may take advantage of my absence, and rob my house. My slaves even may be tempted by so fair an opportunity; they may take flight with the money I have received for my merchandise, and where shall I go to pursue them?" Much occupied by these thoughts, he hastily ate a few morsels, and stole away from the company.

He set out with the utmost diligence; but as it often happens that they who make the most haste, from some adverse accident, have the worse speed, so he, mistaking one road for another, was so bewildered in the dark, that it was near midnight when he arrived at the gate of the city. To complete his misfortune, he found it shut; this obstacle brought on a new distress; he was now obliged to look out for some place where he might pass the remainder of the night, and wait till the gate should be opened. He entered a burying-ground of such vast extent, that it reached from the city to the place he had just quitted; he proceeded till he came to some high walls, which surrounded a private place of burial belonging to a particular family, and in which he observed a large palm-tree. There were a great many other private burying-places, the doors of which

had not been carefully secured. Finding that open where he had seen the palm-tree, he entered, and shut the door after him; he then lay down upon the grass, in the hope of obtaining some repose; but the uneasiness he felt at his situation, did not allow him to sleep. He rose, and after having walked several times backward and forward before the door, he opened it, without well knowing the reason; immediately he perceived at a distance a light, which seemed to approach. He was seized with fear at the sight, and quickly closed the door again, which shut only with a latch, and then hastily ascended the palm-tree, which his fright made him believe to be the most secure situation he could find.

He was no sooner in the tree than he saw, by means of the light which had alarmed him, three men enter the burying-ground, whom he knew by their dress to be slaves. One walked before with a lantern, and the two others followed, loaded with a chest about five or six feet long, which they carried upon their shoulders; they set it down, after which one of the three slaves said to his comrades: "Brothers, if you will take my advice, we shall leave the chest here and return to the city." "No, no," replied another, "we must not execute the orders of our mistress in this manner. We shall certainly repent, if we disobey them: let us bury the chest, since she has commanded it." The other slaves consented, and they began to dig up the earth with some instruments they had brought for the purpose; having made a deep hole, they put in the chest, and covered it with the earth they had removed. They then left the burying-ground, and returned to their home.

Ganem, who had heard from the top of the palm-tree what the slaves had been saying, knew not what to think of this adventure; he imagined that this chest must contain something very precious, and that the person to whom it belonged had some particular reason for having it hidden in this burying-ground. He immediately resolved to be better informed on this subject, and descended from the palm-tree. The departure of the slaves had relieved him from his fears. He went to work, and so well employed his hands and feet on the spot that he soon got a sight of the chest; but he found it fastened by a large padlock. He was much mortified by this new obstacle, which prevented him from gratifying his curiosity. He did not, however, despair, and the light now beginning to dawn, enabled him to discover several large flints, which were lying about in the burying-ground. He took up one of them, with which he forced open the padlock, without much difficulty. Then, full of impatience, he opened the chest. Instead of finding money in it, as he expected, Ganem was inexpressibly surprised at beholding a young lady of extraordinary beauty. By her fresh colour, and the beautiful bloom on her cheeks, and still more by her soft and regular respiration, he discovered her to be alive; but he could not comprehend the reason of her not waking (if she were only asleep) at the noise he had made in forcing the padlock. She was so magnificently dressed, her bracelets and ear-rings were of diamonds, and the necklace of the largest and finest pearls, that he could not for a moment doubt but she must be one of the first ladies of the court. At the sight of so charming an object, Ganem not only felt all the compassion and desire of relieving distress which is natural to man, but a stronger motive prevailed with him, which he did not then well understand, and which led him to do everything in his power to assist this beautiful young creature. The first thing he did was to shut the door of the burying-ground, which the slaves had left open; he then returned to the lady, took her in his arms, and lifting her out of the chest, laid her upon the earth he had just removed. The lady was no sooner released from her confined situation, and exposed to the open air, than she began to sneeze, and a slight effort she made in turning her head, caused a liquid to flow from her mouth,

which seemed to oppress her stomach; then half opening her eyes and rubbing them, she exclaimed, without seeing Ganem, in a voice which delighted him: "Zohorob Bostan (Flower of the Garden), Schagrom Marglan (Branch of Coral), Cassabos Souccar (Sugar-cane), Nouronnihar (Light of Day), Nagmatos Sohi (Star of the Morning), Nouzhetos Zamañ (Delight of the Season), speak, where are you? These were the names of the female slaves who usually attended her. She continued to call them, and was much astonished that no one answered. She at last opened her eyes, and finding herself in a burying-ground, was much alarmed. "What," cried she, in a louder voice, "are the dead come to life? Is the day of judgment arrived? What a change do I behold since last night!"

Ganem was unwilling to leave the lady any longer in this state of disquietude. He immediately presented himself before her with all possible respect and politeness. "Madam," said he, "I can but faintly express the happiness I feel at the accident which, by bringing me here, has enabled me to serve you; permit me to offer you such further assistance as, in your present condition, you must still be in need of."

In order to inspire the lady with confidence, he immediately told her who he was, and by what accident he had entered the burying-ground. He afterwards gave her an account of the arrival of the three slaves, and of the manner in which they had buried the chest. The lady, who had covered her face with a veil as soon as Ganem appeared before her, was affected to the greatest degree when she learned the extent of her obligation to him: "I thank God," said she, "for having sent so worthy a person as yourself to deliver me from death. But since you have begun so charitable a work, I conjure you not to leave it unfinished. Go, I beseech you, to the town, and find a muleteer, who may come and convey me, concealed in this chest, on a mule, to your house; for were I to go with you on foot, my dress being different from that usually worn in the city, would attract attention, and might occasion my being followed, which it is of the greatest importance to me to prevent. When I am arrived at your house, you shall hear my whole history; in the mean time be assured you have not obliged an ungrateful person."

The young merchant, before he quitted the lady, drew the chest from the hole, in which it had been left, and which he again filled up with the earth; he then replaced the lady in the chest, and shut it in such a manner as to make it appear as if the padlock had not been forced: but to guard against her being suffocated, he did not shut the chest so close as to prevent all admission of air. Upon leaving the burying-ground, he closed the door after him; and finding the city-gates open, he had soon an opportunity of obtaining what he sought. He returned to the burying-ground with all despatch, where he helped the muleteer to place the chest across his mule; and to remove any suspicion he might entertain, told him that it had arrived late in the night with another muleteer, who, being in haste to return, had left the chest in the burying-ground.

Ganem, who since his arrival at Bagdad had been entirely engrossed by his business, had never yet known the force of love. He now felt its power for the first time. It was impossible to see the young lady without admiration; and the agitation he experienced whilst following the muleteer at a distance, and his fear lest some accident should deprive him of his prize, led him to suspect the real cause of his emotions. His joy was extreme on returning home, to see the chest safely deposited. He sent away the muleteer; and having ordered one of his slaves to fasten the door that led to the street, opened the chest, and helped the lady out of it; then presenting her his hand, he conducted her to his apartment, lamenting how much she must have suffered in so close

an imprisonment. "I am well recompensed," said she to him, "for all I have suffered, by the kindness you have shown me, and by the pleasure I feel at finding myself now in security."

The apartment of Ganem, although richly furnished, less attracted the attention of the lady than the handsome figure and countenance of her deliverer, whose politeness and engaging manners inspired her with the most lively gratitude. She sat down on a sofa, and to give the merchant some proof that she was not insensible to the great obligations she was under for the important service he had rendered her, took off her veil. Ganem, on his part, was fully impressed with the favour conferred on him by so charming a woman, in appearing with her face uncovered; or rather, he felt already a violent passion for her. However she might be obliged to him, he thought himself amply rewarded by so great an indulgence.

The lady penetrated Ganem's sentiments, and was not alarmed by them, because his behaviour was so perfectly respectful. Supposing that she must wish to eat, and not choosing to rely on any one to provide for so lovely a guest, he went out himself, followed by a slave, to order an elegant repast from a neighbouring tavern. From thence he went to a fruiterer's shop, where he selected the finest and choicest fruits. He provided also some excellent wine, and some of the same kind of bread which is eaten in the palace of the caliph.

As soon as he returned home, he with his own hands arranged the fruit he had brought in a pyramidal form, and presented it himself to the lady, in a dish of beautiful porcelain: "Madam," said he, "whilst you are waiting for a more solid and more suitable repast, let me entreat you to take some of this fruit." He wished to show his respect by continuing to stand, till she assured him she would not touch a morsel unless he would sit down and partake with her of the entertainment. He obeyed. Whilst they were thus employed, Ganem, remarking that the lady's veil, which she had placed near her on the sofa, was embroidered at the edge with letters of gold, asked to look at it. The lady took up the veil immediately, and presenting it to him, asked if he could read. "Madam," replied he, with an air of modesty, "a merchant would ill transact his commercial concerns, if he did not at least know how to read and write." "Well, then," returned she, "read the words which are written upon this veil: they will offer an occasion for me to relate my story to you."

Ganem took the veil and read the following words: "I AM THINE AND THOU ART MINE, O DESCENDANT OF THE UNCLE OF THE PROPHET!" This descendant of the uncle of the prophet was the caliph Haroun Alraschid, the reigning monarch at that time, who was descended from Abbas, the uncle of Mahomet.

As soon as Ganem understood the meaning of the words which had attracted his notice, he exclaimed in a melancholy tone, "Ah, madam, I have been the means of preserving your life, and this writing will deprive me of mine! I do not quite understand this mystery; I see, however, but too well that I am the most unhappy of men: pardon, madam, the liberty I take in saying so. It was impossible for me to see you without surrendering my heart. You cannot be ignorant that it was beyond my power to resist your charms, which alone can afford any excuse for my presumption. I had hoped to touch your heart by my respect, my attentions, my compliance, my assiduity, my submission, or at least by my constancy; and scarcely had I conceived the flattering design, than I find all my hopes dashed to the ground. I can hardly flatter myself that I shall be long able to support so great a misfortune; but whatever may be the event, I shall have the consolation of living or dying wholly yours. Proceed, madam, I conjure you, and let me know the whole extent of my misery."

He could not utter these words without shedding tears. The lady was affected by them; and, far from being displeased at the declaration she had just heard, felt a secret satisfaction in consequence of it, as her heart also began to be touched. She concealed, however, her feelings, and as if she had not given the slightest attention to what Ganem had said, "I should have taken great care," replied she, "not to have let you see my veil, if I imagined it could have caused you so much uneasiness; nor am I the least aware that what I have to relate ought to render your fate so deplorable as you represent.

"You must know then," continued she, "in order to understand my history, that I am called Fetnab (tormentor of hearts); a name which was given me at my birth, it being foreseen that the sight of me would one day cause much misery. You can scarcely be unacquainted with this name, since there is no one in Bagdad who does not know that the caliph Haroun Alraschid, my sovereign master and yours, has a favourite so called.

"I was brought to his palace in my infancy, and have been educated with all the care and attention which is usually bestowed on young persons of my sex who are destined to remain there. I was not backward in learning such accomplishments as it was thought necessary to instruct me in; and these, joined to a little beauty, gained me the friendship of the caliph, who gave me a private apartment near his own. The prince did not confine himself to this mark of favour: he appointed twenty women and as many eunuchs to attend me; and from that time has made me such considerable presents, that I am become richer than any queen in the world. You will readily imagine that Zobeidè, the wife and relation of the caliph, could not behold my good fortune without jealousy. The truth is, that although Haroun pays her all imaginable attention, she has sought every possible occasion to ruin me.

"I have always successfully guarded against her snares previous to this last effort of her jealousy, by which I was overpowered, and in consequence of which I should, but for you, have been at this moment awaiting an inevitable death. I do not doubt that she suborned one of my slaves to give me in my lemonade last night a certain drug of a nature to produce complete insensibility, and thus make it easy to dispose of those who have taken it. This insensibility is indeed sometimes so great, that for seven or eight hours nothing can dispel it. I have the greater reason to entertain this opinion, as my sleep is naturally very light, and I wake with the slightest noise.

"Zobeidè, in order to execute her wicked design, has taken advantage of the absence of the caliph, who set out a few days since to put himself at the head of his troops, in order to punish the audacity of some neighbouring kings, who are in league together to make war upon him. But for this circumstance, my rival, enraged as she is, would not have ventured to attempt my life. By what arts she intends to keep the affair concealed from the caliph, is beyond my power to discover; but you see that it is of the utmost importance that you should not betray the place of my abode, as my life depends upon it; were I known to be in your house, I should not be in safety a moment whilst the caliph is absent from Bagdad. Indeed you are yourself interested in not disclosing my adventure; for if Zobeidè were to know the obligation I am under to you, she would punish you herself for having preserved me.

"At the return of the caliph, I shall have less occasion to be cautious. I shall, I doubt not, find means to inform him of all that has passed, and I am persuaded he will be still more earnest than myself to acknowledge a service which restores me to his love."

As soon as the beautiful favourite of Haroun Alraschid had ceased to speak, Ganem began: "Madam," said he, "I return you a thousand thanks for having given me the information I took the liberty of requesting; and I beg

you will believe that you are here in perfect safety. The sentiments with which you have inspired me will insure my discretion. As for that of my slaves, I confess it is not to be trusted: They might fail in the fidelity they owe me, if they knew by what accident and in what place I had the happiness of meeting with you. But it is impossible for them to guess it, and I will venture to assure you that they will not have the smallest curiosity to inform themselves of the affair. It is so usual for young men to search for beautiful slaves, that they will not be at all surprised to see you here, as they will naturally conjecture that you are one whom I have just bought. They will think, too, that I might have my reasons for bringing you here in the manner which they saw. Let your mind then be at ease on this subject, and be assured that you shall be treated with all the respect which is due to the favourite of so great a monarch as ours. But whatever greatness may surround you, permit me to declare to you, Adam, that nothing will ever make me revoke the present I have made you of my heart. I also know, and I shall never forget it, that 'what belongs to the master is forbidden to the slave;' but I loved you before I knew that your faith was pledged to the caliph; it does not depend upon myself to conquer a passion which, though still in its infancy, has all the strength of love fortified by long continuance. I wish that your august and too happy lover may revenge the malignity of Zobeidè by recalling you to his presence: and when you shall be restored to his wishes, that you may sometimes think of the unfortunate Ganem, who is not less your admirer than the caliph. Powerful as this prince is, if you are sensible to tenderness alone, even he, I flatter myself, will not be able wholly to efface me from your memory. He cannot love you with more ardour than I do; and never shall I cease to adore you, in whatever part of the world I may go to bewail my loss and die."

Fetnab could not avoid perceiving that Ganem was penetrated with the most poignant grief, nor being affected at what she saw; but aware of the embarrassment that the continuance of such a conversation must produce, and which might lead her insensibly to discover the inclination she felt towards him—"I see," said she, "that this conversation gives you pain, let us not continue it; but allow me to express the infinite obligations I owe you. I have indeed no words to communicate my gratitude, when I reflect that without your succour I should probably at this moment have been deprived of life."

Fortunately for both of them, some one now knocked at the door. Ganem rose to see who it might be, and found it was one of his slaves, who came to announce to him the arrival of the master of the tavern. Ganem, who for the greater security would not permit his slaves to enter the apartment where Fetnab was, went out to take what had been prepared at the tavern, and served it himself to his beautiful guest, who in her own mind was delighted with the attention he paid her.

After the repast was finished, Ganem took all the things away in the same manner as he had served them; and having given them to his slaves, who remained at the door—"Madam," said he to Fetnab, "you will now, perhaps, be glad to take some repose. I will leave you, and when you have refreshed yourself, you will find me ready to receive your commands." As soon as he had said this, he went out and bought two female slaves; he also purchased some very fine linen, and everything necessary for a toilet worthy the favourite of the caliph. He brought the slaves home with him, and presenting them to Fetnab, "A person like you, madam," said he, "must have occasion for at least two slaves to wait upon you: permit me to present you with these."

Fetnab was charmed with Ganem's attentions: "My lord," said she, "I see you are not a man to do things imperfectly. You increase my obligations to you by your manner of conferring them; but I hope I shall not die without

giving you proofs of my gratitude, and that Heaven will soon place me in a situation to acknowledge all your generosity towards me."

When the slaves had retired to an adjoining apartment, into which the young merchant sent them, he sat down upon the same sofa with Fetnab, but at some distance from her, in order to show his respect. He again turned the conversation upon his passion, and said many affecting things upon the invincible obstacles which deprived him of all hope. "I dare not even flatter myself," said he, "with exciting by my tenderness any favourable emotion in a heart like yours, which is destined for the most powerful prince in the world. Alas! it would be some consolation in my wretchedness, if I could flatter myself that you did not look upon the excess of my passion with indifference." "My lord—" replied Fetnab. "Ah! madam," interrupted Ganem at this expression, "it is the second time you have treated me with a degree of ceremony to which I have no pretence: the presence of the female slaves prevented me from saying what I wished on the former occasion; for God's sake, madam, do not treat me with a respect to which I have no claim. Command me as your slave, I beseech you; I am so, and never shall be otherwise."

"No, no," interrupted Fetnab, in her turn, "I can never think of treating a man who has saved my life, otherwise than with respect. I should be very ungrateful if I said or did anything that would betray a forgetfulness of your claims. Let me then follow the dictates of my gratitude; and do not require, as the price of your services, that I should treat you with incivility. It is what I shall never consent to. I am too sensible of your respectful conduct to abuse the liberty you give me, and I will confess to you, that I do not see with an eye of indifference the attentions you have shown me. It is impossible for me to say more; you know the reasons which condemn me to silence."

Ganem was delighted with this declaration: he even wept for joy, and not being able to find terms sufficiently strong to express his thanks to Fetnab, satisfied himself with saying, that if she knew what was due from her to the caliph, he on his part was not ignorant that "what belongs to the master is forbidden to the slave."

When he perceived that night was coming on, he left the room in order to get a light, which he brought himself, as well as something by way of supper, as was customary in Bagdad; where, after the principal meal at noon, they pass the evenings in eating fruit and drinking wine, agreeably intermixed with conversation.

They both placed themselves at table, offering each other, with much politeness, the fruits which were before them. The excellence of the wine insensibly led them to drink; and they had no sooner taken two or three cups each, than they determined to drink no more without singing. Ganem sung some verses he composed at the moment, expressive of the violence of his passion; and Fetnab, animated by his example, composed and sung a variety of airs, which had relation to her own adventure, and in which there was always something that Ganem might interpret in his favour. This was the only instance, in her whole conduct, in which she did not preserve her fidelity to the caliph most inviolate. The repast was of long continuance, and the night far advanced before they thought of separating. Ganem, however, at length retired to another apartment, and left Fetnab in that she already occupied, where the female slaves he had purchased soon came to attend her.

They lived together in this manner for several days, the young merchant never leaving his house but when called away by business of the greatest importance, and then he chose those times when the lady took her repose; for he could not bear to lose a single moment that he was permitted to pass in her company. He thought of nothing but his dear Fetnab; and she, being led by

inclination as well as gratitude, could not help at length confessing, that her affection for him was not less than what he professed for her. At the same time, much as they were enamoured of each other, their respect for the caliph was sufficiently strong to keep them within due bounds, though it certainly served to increase their passion.

Whilst Fetnab, snatched as it were from the jaws of death, passed her time so agreeably with Ganem, Zobeidè was by no means free from embarrassment, in the palace of Haroun Alraschid.

The three slaves, the ministers of her vengeance, had no sooner taken away the chest, ignorant of what it contained—and, like people accustomed to execute blindly the command of a superior, not even desirous of informing themselves—than she became a prey to the most distressing anxiety. A thousand importunate reflections disturbed her repose. She could not for a moment enjoy the sweets of sleep; her nights were passed in endeavouring to find out the means of concealing her crime. "My husband," said she, "loves Fetnab more than he has ever loved any of his favourites. What shall I say when, at his return, he asks for her?" Several stratagems occurred to her, but she was satisfied with none of them; some difficulty always presented itself, and she knew not on what to determine. She had about her an old lady, who had brought her up from her earliest infancy, whom she ordered to attend her at daybreak; and after having confided her secret to her—"My good mother," said she, "you have always assisted me with your excellent advice; if ever it was necessary to me, it is on the present occasion, when my troubled mind seeks for something to calm its agitation, and when means must be found to satisfy the caliph."

"My dear mistress," replied the old lady, "it would have been much better if you had not brought yourself into this difficulty; but as the matter is now done, we must say no more about it, and only think of some stratagem to deceive the Commander of the Faithful. I am of opinion that you should immediately get a piece of wood carved to appear like a corpse; we will wrap it up in some old linen, and, after having enclosed it in a coffin, will order it to be buried in some place belonging to the palace: then, without loss of time, you shall cause a marble mausoleum, in the form of a dome, to be built over the place of burial, an effigy to be erected, which shall be covered with black cloth, surrounded with chandeliers and large wax-lights. There is still another thing," added the old lady, "which must not be omitted; you must go into mourning, and order your own women to do the same: those of Fetnab also, as well as your eunuchs, and all the officers of the palace must be commanded to appear in the same manner. When the caliph returns, and sees the whole palace in mourning, and yourself also, he will not fail to ask the reason of it. You will then have an opportunity of recommending yourself by saying, that out of respect to him you were anxious to render the last offices to Fetnab, who had been taken away by sudden death. You will inform him that you have caused a mausoleum to be built, in order that every honour might be conferred on the memory of his favourite, in the same manner as if he himself had been present. As his passion for her was excessive, he will no doubt shed tears over her grave. Perhaps, too," said the old lady, "he will not believe that she is really dead, but may suspect that through jealousy you have driven her from the palace, and may look upon this mourning merely as an artifice to deceive him, and to divert him from making any search. It is not unlikely that he may have the coffin taken up and opened, when he will certainly be persuaded of her death as soon as he sees the appearance of a corpse. He will then feel himself much obliged to you, for what you have done, and will warmly express his gratitude. As to the piece of wood, I will take care to have it carved by an artificer in the city, who

will not know for what purpose it is intended. Do you, madam, order the woman who gave Fetnab her lemonade last night, to tell her companions that she has just found her mistress dead in bed; and, in order that they may lament her without wishing to go into her chamber, let her add, that she has informed you of it, and that you have already given orders to Mesrour for her interment."

As soon as the old lady ceased speaking, Zobeidè took a fine diamond from her casket, and putting it upon her finger, embraced her in a transport of joy, saying, "Ah, my good mother, how much I am obliged to you! I should never have thought of so ingenious an expedient. It cannot fail of success, and I feel my tranquillity already returning. I rely upon you for providing the wooden image, and I will go and give orders about the rest."

The image was prepared with all the diligence Zobeidè could desire, and carried by the old lady herself into the apartment of Fetnab, where she attired it like a corpse, and placed it in the coffin; then Mesrour, who was himself deceived, ordered the coffin, and the figure representing Fetnab, to be carried away and buried with the customary ceremonies in the place which Zobeidè had appointed, amidst the tears and lamentations of the favourite's women, who were strongly incited to them by the example of the slave who had given her the lemonade.

On the same day Zobeidè sent for the architect of the palace and various mansions belonging to the caliph; and in consequence of the orders she gave him, the mausoleum was very soon finished. A princess so powerful as the wife of a monarch who rules from the setting to the rising sun, is obeyed with unusual alacrity in the execution of her orders. She also, with her whole court, were soon clad in mourning, a circumstance which gave immediate circulation to the report of Fetnab's death, so that the news was quickly spread throughout the whole city.

Ganem was one of the last to hear of it; for, as I have before said, he scarcely ever went from home; he was, however, at last made acquainted with the report. "Madam," said he to the beautiful favourite of the caliph, "your death is generally believed in Bagdad, and I do not doubt but Zobeidè is perfectly persuaded that the belief is well founded. I thank Heaven, however, for being the cause and happy witness of your existence. Would to God, that, taking advantage of this false report, you could be persuaded to unite your fate with mine, and, going far from hence, reign the sole possessor of my heart! But whither does my transport hurry me? I do not consider that you are born to be the delight of the most powerful prince on earth, and that Haroun Al-raschid is alone worthy of you. Were you then capable of resigning him for me, would you even join your fates to mine, ought I to consent to it? No! it would still be my duty to keep constantly in remembrance, that 'what belongs to the master is forbidden to the slave.'"

The amiable Fetnab, though sensible to the tender emotions which he manifested, had sufficient command over herself to conceal what she felt in return. "My lord," said she, "we cannot hinder the present success of Zobeidè. I am not surprised at the artifice she has made use of to conceal her crime; but let her proceed as she pleases, her triumph, I flatter myself, will be but short, and soon followed by disgrace. The caliph will ere long return, and we shall find means privately to inform him of all that has passed. In the mean time, let us take greater precaution than ever to prevent her suspecting that I am still alive. I have already told you what would be the consequences."

At the end of three months, the caliph returned to Bagdad covered with glory, having been victorious over all his enemies. Impatient to return to

Fetnab, and lay his laurels at her feet, he entered his palace. How great was his astonishment at seeing all his officers clothed in black. He shuddered involuntarily at the sight; and his emotion increased, when he reached the apartment of Zobeidè, at perceiving that the princess, as well as her whole train of women, were in deep mourning. He instantly, with much agitation, asked the reason of this melancholy appearance. "Commander of the Faithful," answered Zobeidè, "I wear this mourning for your slave Fetnab, who died so suddenly, as to render it impossible to apply any remedy to her disease." She would have proceeded, but the caliph did not allow her time. He was so much affected at the intelligence, that he uttered a shriek, and fell senseless into the arms of his vizier Giafar, who accompanied him. He, however, soon recovered, and in a voice which betrayed his deep affliction, requested to know where his dear Fetnab had been buried. "My lord," said Zobeidè, "I have myself taken care that everything should be done to pay her the last honours with suitable magnificence. I have caused a marble mausoleum to be erected at the place of her interment. I will conduct you thither if you wish it."

The caliph did not choose to give Zobeidè the trouble, and was satisfied with being attended by Mesrour. He proceeded to the place immediately, without changing his dress. When he saw the effigy covered with black cloth, the tapers burning round it, and the magnificence of the monument, he was astonished that Zobeidè should have performed the obsequies of her rival with so much pomp; and, as he was naturally suspicious, began to distrust the generosity of his wife, and to think it possible that his mistress might not be really dead, but that Zobeidè, taking advantage of his long absence, might have driven her from the palace, and given orders to have her conveyed to so great a distance that she should never be heard of more. He suspected nothing worse, for he did not believe Zobeidè to be wicked enough to attempt the life of his favourite.

In order to satisfy himself of the truth, this prince ordered the effigy to be taken down, the grave to be opened, and the coffin to be uncovered in his presence: but when he saw the linen which enveloped the piece of wood, he did not dare to proceed. The pious caliph feared to offend against the laws of religion by permitting the body of the deceased to be touched, and this devout scruple prevailed over both curiosity and love. He no longer doubted the death of Fetnab. He ordered the coffin to be again closed, the grave to be filled up, and the effigy to be placed in the same situation as before.

Thinking it necessary to pay some tribute of respect at the tomb of his favourite, he then sent for the ministers of religion, those of the palace, and the readers of the Koran: and during the time which it required to assemble them, he remained in the mausoleum, bedewing with his tears the earth which covered the image of his mistress. When the ministers arrived, he placed himself at the head of the effigy, and they ranging themselves around it, recited long prayers, after which several chapters of the Koran were read.

The same ceremony was performed every day for a month, both morning and evening, and always in the presence of the caliph, of the grand vizier Giafar, and of the principal officers of the court, who, as well as the caliph, were all in mourning. During the whole time he never ceased to honour with his tears the memory of Fetnab, nor would he be interrupted by any business whatever.

On the last day of the month, the prayers and reading of the Koran continued from morning till daybreak on the following day; the whole ceremony being now finished, every one returned to his own house. Haroun Alraschid, fatigued by watching so long, went to rest himself in his apartment, and fell asleep upon a sofa between two of the ladies of his palace, one of whom

sat at his feet and the other at his head, employed in works of embroidery, and keeping the most profound silence during his sleep.

She who sat at his head, and who was called Nouronihar, perceiving the caliph to be asleep, said in a low voice to the other lady, "Nagmatos Sohi," for that was her name, "there is great news. The Commander of the Faithful, our dear lord and master, will be delighted when he wakes, to learn what I have to communicate. Fetnab is not dead, she is in perfect health."

"O heavens!" cried Nagmatos Sohi, "is it possible that the charming, the incomparable Fetnab should be still alive?" Nagmatos Sohi spoke these words with so much vivacity, and in so loud a voice, that the caliph awoke. He inquired why his sleep had been interrupted. "Ah, my lord," replied Nagmatos Sohi, "pardon my indiscretion; I could not hear without emotion that Fetnab still lives. It inspired me with a transport I could not restrain." "What then is become of her," said the caliph, "if it be true she is not dead?" "Commander of the Faithful," replied Nouronihar, "I received this evening from a person unknown, a note without any signature, but evidently in the handwriting of Fetnab, who relates her melancholy adventure, and desires me to inform you of it. I delayed executing my commission till you had taken some moments of repose, knowing how necessary it must be to you after so much fatigue; and——" "Give me, give me the note," interrupted the caliph with great eagerness; "your delay was very unseasonable."

Nouronihar immediately presented the note to him, which he opened with extreme impatience. Fetnab had detailed at length all that had happened to her, but had dwelt a little too much on the attentions she had received from Ganem. The caliph, naturally of a jealous disposition, instead of being softened by a consideration of the ills his favourite had experienced from the inhumanity of Zobeide, was only sensible to the infidelity of which he imagined her to have been guilty. "What," said he, when he had perused the note; "perfidious wretch! after having lived for months with a young merchant, has she the effrontery to boast of his attentions to her? I have been returned to Bagdad thirty days, and she has never troubled herself to let me hear of her till now! Ungrateful creature! whilst I was consuming whole days in lamenting her, she passed them in betraying me. I will this instant revenge myself on the faithless wretch, and on the presumptuous youth who has dared to injure me." The prince rose as he finished these words, and proceeded towards a large hall, where he was accustomed to show himself and give audience to the great men of his court. The door of the hall was open, and the courtiers who were waiting for his appearance, entered. The grand vizier Giafar approached and prostrated himself before the throne on which the caliph was seated. He then rose and stood before his master, who said in a tone which demanded prompt obedience, "Giafar, your presence is required in the execution of an important commission with which I am going to intrust you. Take with you four hundred of my guards: inform yourself where a merchant of Damascus, called Ganem, the son of Abou Aibou, resides: when you have discovered his abode, raze the house to the ground; but first seize Ganem and bring him hither with Fetnab, my slave, who has been living with him these four months. I wish not only to chastise her, but to make a public example of the bold wretch, who has with so much insolence been unmindful of the respect he owes to his sovereign."

The grand vizier, after having received this express command, made a profound obeisance to the caliph, putting his hand to his head to show that he would rather lose it than be wanting in obedience; after this he withdrew. The first step he took was to send to the syndic of the merchants who dealt in foreign silks, or fine cloths, in order to inform himself of the house and street

in which Ganem lived. The officer to whom this order was given soon brought an account back, that for some months Ganem had scarcely ever made his appearance, and that the reason why he remained so much at home was unknown; and that it was even doubtful whether he was still at Bagdad. The same officer also informed Giafar of the situation of Ganem's house, and of the widow's name of whom he had hired it.

On obtaining this intelligence, upon which he could rely, the minister, without loss of time, at the head of the soldiers which the caliph had ordered him to take, began his march. He went to the officer of the police, whom he desired to accompany him; then followed by a great number of masons and carpenters, furnished with the necessary implements, he arrived before Ganem's house. As it stood alone, he made the soldiers surround it, in order to prevent the young merchant from making his escape.

Fetnab and Ganem were just finishing their dinner. The lady was seated near a window which opened towards the street. Hearing a noise she looked through the lattice, and seeing the grand vizier approaching with his train, conjectured there was some design against Ganem as well as herself. She perceived that her note had been received, but she little expected such an answer; she had hoped the caliph would have taken it in a very different manner. She knew not that the prince had been so long returned, and therefore felt, though aware of his tendency to jealousy, no apprehension on that account. Still the sight of the grand vizier and his soldiers made her tremble, not indeed for herself, but for Ganem. She did not doubt that she should be able to justify herself, provided the caliph would consent to hear her. With regard to Ganem, whom she loved less through gratitude than from inclination, she foresaw that his irritated rival would probably choose to see him, and then condemn him to death on account of his youth and handsome person. Full of this idea, she turned towards the young merchant and said: "Ah, Ganem, we are ruined! they are in search of us." He immediately looked through the lattice, and was extremely alarmed when he perceived the caliph's guards with drawn swords, and the grand vizier with the police officer at their head. He was so terrified at the sight that he remained motionless, and unable to utter a single word. "Ganem," said the favourite, "there is no time to be lost. If you love me, quickly put on the dress of one of your slaves, and rub your face and arms with soot from the chimney; then place one of these dishes upon your head, and they will take you for the waiter from the tavern, and will let you pass. If you are asked where the master of the house is, say without hesitation he is at home." "Ah, madam," said Ganem, less alarmed for himself than for Fetnab, "you are thinking only of me; alas! what is to become of you?" "Do not distress yourself about me," replied the lady, "I shall take care of myself; with regard to what you have in this house, I will provide for its safety, and it will all, I hope, be faithfully restored to you when the caliph's anger shall have subsided; but let me entreat you to avoid its violence. The orders which he gives in the first moments of his rage are always fatal." The young merchant was so much afflicted that he knew not on what to determine, and would have suffered himself to have been surprised by the caliph's soldiers, had not Fetnab eagerly pressed him to disguise himself. He gave way to her entreaties, put on a slave's dress, and besmeared himself with soot: he was barely in time; a knocking was now heard at the door; all they could do was to take one tender embrace before they parted, for they were too deeply afflicted to utter a syllable. Thus they took leave of each other; Ganem went out with the dishes upon his head, and being really taken for the waiter of the tavern, was allowed to pass without interruption. The grand vizier, who met him first, made way for him, not having the most distant idea that he was the very person whom he was seeking.

Those who were behind the grand vizier retired in the same manner, and thus favoured his getting off. He reached one of the gates of the town with all possible despatch, and in this way effected his escape.

Whilst by this stratagem he was flying from the pursuit of the grand vizier, that minister entered the apartment of Fetnab, whom he found seated on a sofa; the room was filled with a great number of chests, containing goods belonging to Ganem, and money, which he had made by the sale of his merchandise.

As soon as Fetnab saw the grand vizier enter, she prostrated herself with her face to the ground, and remained in that posture, like one who was prepared to receive the stroke of death: "My lord," said she, "I am ready to submit to the sentence that the Commander of the Faithful has pronounced against me; you have only to declare it." "Madam," replied Giafar, also prostrating himself till she was raised, "God forbid that any one should dare to touch you with profane hands. I have no design to give you the least cause of his displeasure. I have no other orders than to request you to come with me to the palace, and to conduct you thither with the merchant who inhabits this house." "My lord," replied the favourite, rising, "let us depart; I am ready to attend you. With regard to the young merchant to whom I owe my life, he is not here; he has been gone near a month to Damascus, whither his affairs called him, and has left me the care of the chests you see, till his return. I beseech you to permit them to be carried to the palace, and to give orders that they may be put in a place of safety, as I am very desirous to keep the promise I made him, that I would take all possible care of them."

"You shall be obeyed, madam," replied Giafar; and he immediately ordered some porters to be sent for, who took up the chests, and carried them to Mesrour.

As soon as the porters were gone, he whispered something to the officer of police, whom he commissioned to see that the house was completely razed to the ground: but not till a thorough search had first been made after Ganem, whom he suspected to be still concealed in it, notwithstanding what Fetnab had said. He now went away, and conducted with him the young lady, followed by the two female slaves who had attended her. As to Ganem's slaves, no attention was paid to them; they mingled indiscriminately with the crowd, nor is it known what became of them.

Giafar was scarcely out of the house, when the masons and the carpenters began their work of destruction; and they did their duty so well, that in less than an hour, not a vestige remained. But the officer of the police, not being able to find Ganem, though he had made the most diligent scrutiny, sent to inform the grand vizier of his ill success before that minister reached the palace. "Well," said Haroun Alraschid, when he saw him enter his cabinet, "have you executed my orders?" "Yes, sire," replied Giafar, "the house which Ganem inhabited is totally demolished, and I bring with me your favourite, Fetnab; she is at the door of your apartment, and will enter when you shall give your orders. The young merchant could nowhere be found, though the most diligent search was made for him. Fetnab asserts, that he has been gone to Damascus nearly a month."

Never did rage equal that of the caliph when he learned that Ganem had made his escape. With regard to his favourite, persuaded as he was that she had not been faithful to him, he would neither see nor speak with her. "Mesrour," said he to the chief of the eunuchs, who was present, "take the ungrateful, the perfidious Fetnab, and shut her up in the dark tower." This tower was within the walls of the palace, and generally served as a prison for those favourites who had offended the caliph.

Mesrou, though accustomed to execute the orders of his master, however violent, without reply, obeyed this with regret. He expressed his sorrow to Fetnab, who was the more afflicted at it, as she had persuaded herself that the caliph would not refuse to speak with her. But there was now no way of escape from her melancholy fate; she followed Mesrou, who conducted her to the dark tower, and there left her.

In the mean time, the enraged caliph dismissed his grand vizier; and, listening only to his passion, wrote with his own hand the following letter to the king of Syria, who was his cousin, and tributary to him.

"The Caliph Haroun Alraschid to Mohammed Zinebi, King of Syria."

"Cousin, this letter is to inform you, that a merchant of Damascus, called Ganem, the son of Abou Aibou, has seduced Fetnab, the most beautiful of my slaves; and has since taken flight. It is my desire that upon the receipt of this, you cause strict search to be made after the above Ganem, and that you have him put into safe custody. As soon as he is in your power, I desire that he may be loaded with irons, and for three successive days let him receive fifty lashes. Order him to be afterwards led through all the quarters of the city, preceded by a crier, who shall proclaim these words: 'Behold the slightest punishment which the Commander of the Faithful inflicts on him who injures his sovereign, and seduces one of his slaves.' After that, you shall send him to me, under a strong guard. But this is not all; I desire that you give up his house to be plundered, and as soon as it is destroyed, let the materials be carried without the town, and dispersed in the open fields. Moreover, if he has a father, mother, sisters, wives, daughters, or any other relations, let them be completely stripped, and in this state exposed in the town for three days, with the penalty of death to any one who gives them shelter. I hope there will be no delay in the execution of my commands.

"HAROUN ALRASCHID."

The caliph, as soon as he had written this letter, delivered it to a courier, ordering him to use all possible despatch, and to take some pigeons with him, that he might receive in the quickest manner possible the information he wished to obtain from Mohammed Zinebi.

The pigeons of Bagdad have the peculiar property of returning to that city, however distant the place may be from which they are let loose; more particularly when they have young ones. The way in which they are made use of is to tie a letter under the wing of the bird; and in this manner intelligence is very soon conveyed from whatever place it is required.

The caliph's messenger travelled night and day, in order to gratify the impatience of his master: when he arrived at Damascus, he proceeded immediately to the palace of Zinebi, who received the letter of the caliph seated on his throne. The courier presented it to the king, who instantly took it, and immediately recognising the hand, rose from his seat, as a proof of his respect, kissing the letter and putting it to his head to show that he was ready to execute, with all submission, whatever orders it might contain. He opened and read it, after which he descended from his throne, mounted his horse without delay, and ordered the principal officers of his household to attend him. He also sent for the officer of the police; and, followed by his whole guard, proceeded to Ganem's house.

During the whole time that the young merchant had been absent from Damascus, his mother had not received any letter from him, though the merchants whom he accompanied to Bagdad were safely returned. They told her that they had all left him in perfect health; but as he did not return, and

neglected to send her any information immediately from himself, so tender a mother was induced to believe that her son was dead. She was so thoroughly persuaded of it, that she wore mourning for him, and lamented him as sincerely as if she had seen him die, and had herself closed his eyes. No mother ever expressed more sincere grief; and far from seeking consolation, she took pleasure in indulging her affliction. She caused a dome to be erected in the court belonging to her house, under which she placed a statue of her son, and with her own hands covered it with black cloth. In this building she passed whole days and nights, lamenting her son in the same manner as if his body had been buried there; the beautiful Alcolomb, her daughter, was her companion in affliction, mingling her tears with those of her mother.

They had already passed some time in this melancholy state, pitied by the whole neighbourhood, who heard their lamentable cries and expressions of sorrow, when King Mohammed Zinebi came and knocked at the door; and a female having opened it, he hastily entered, asking for Ganem, the son of Abou Aïbou.

As the slave had never seen the king, she concluded from his numerous suite, that he was one of the principal officers of Damascus. "My lord," said she, "Ganem, whom you inquire for, is dead. My mistress, his mother, is now at his tomb, which you see before you, lamenting his loss." Without paying attention to what the slave related, the king ordered his guards to make strict search for Ganem throughout the house. He afterwards proceeded himself towards the tomb, where he beheld the mother and daughter bathed in tears, seated upon a common mat, near the figure which represented Ganem. As soon as they perceived a man at the door of the building, these unfortunate women covered themselves with their veils. But the mother, who recollected the king, immediately rose, and ran to throw herself at his feet. "My good lady," said the prince to her, "I am in search of your son Ganem; is he here?" "Ah, sire," cried she, "he has been long dead. Would to God I had been permitted to perform the last offices for him with my own hands; that I had been allowed the consolation of depositing his bones within this tomb! Oh, my son! my beloved son!"—she would have proceeded, but her grief was so excessive, that it choked her utterance.

Zinebi was affected at what he saw, being a prince of a mild disposition, and very compassionate to the sufferings of the unhappy. "If Ganem alone is guilty," said he to himself, "why punish his mother and sister, who are innocent? Cruel Haroun Alraschid, how much you distress me by making me the minister of your vengeance, and obliging me to prosecute those who have never offended you!"

The guards whom the king had sent to seek for Ganem, now came to inform him that their search had been fruitless. He was perfectly satisfied of it, for the tears of the two women would not permit him to entertain a doubt of the truth of their report. He was miserable at finding himself reduced to the necessity of executing the caliph's orders; but whatever concern he might feel, he did not dare to deceive him by screening them from his resentment. "My good lady," said he to Ganem's mother, "leave this tomb; neither you nor your daughters are here in safety." When they came out, he, in order to preserve them from insult, took off his robe, which was very large, and covered them both with it, recommending them to keep near him. This being done, he ordered the populace to be admitted, and the pillage commenced with an eagerness, and with shouts which terrified the mother and sister of Ganem, the more, as they were perfectly ignorant of the cause of these proceedings. The most valuable furniture was seized on, as well as chests full of money; Persian and Indian carpets, cushions covered with gold and silver stuffs, the finest

porcelain; in short, everything was carried off, and nothing left but the bare walls of the house. It was a melancholy sight for these unhappy women to see all they possessed given up to plunder, without knowing in the least why they were so cruelly treated.

Mohammed, after the pillage of the house, ordered the police-officer to have it utterly razed, as well as the tomb; whilst they were employed at this work, he conducted Alcolomb and her mother to his palace. It was then that he redoubled their affliction by declaring to them the will of the caliph. "He orders," said he, "that you should be stripped and exposed naked before all the people during three days. It is with extreme repugnance that I execute this cruel and ignominious sentence." The king uttered these words in a manner which proved how sincerely he felt the sorrow and compassion he expressed. Although the fear of being dethroned prevented his giving way to the suggestions of pity, he nevertheless softened in some degree the rigour of Haroun Alraschid's commands, by ordering for Alcolomb and her mother a coarse covering without sleeves, made of horse-hair.

The next day, these unfortunate victims of the caliph's resentment were stripped of their clothes, and dressed in their rough garments. Their head-dresses were also taken off, and their dishevelled hair left to hang loose over their shoulders. Alcolomb's was of a light colour, the most beautiful imaginable, reaching down to the ground. The police-officer, followed by his attendants, accompanied them, and led them throughout the city. They were preceded by a crier, who from time to time proclaimed in a loud voice, "This is the punishment of those who draw upon themselves the indignation of the Commander of the Faithful." Whilst they were thus carried about Damascus, their arms and feet naked, in so strange a dress, and endeavouring to conceal their confusion by covering their faces with their hair, the people were melted even to tears at so affecting a sight.

The women especially, looking through the lattices at these innocent sufferers, as they justly esteemed them, and feeling particularly for the youth and beauty of Alcolomb, made the air resound with their piteous cries, as these devoted objects passed under their windows. The children, too, terrified by the lamentations, and by the sight which occasioned them, added their cries to the general affliction, and increased the horror of the scene. In short, had the enemies of the state taken possession of Damascus, put the people to the sword, and set fire to the place, there could not have appeared greater marks of consternation.

It was almost night before this dreadful spectacle finished. The mother and daughter were then brought back to the palace of the king, where they no sooner arrived than they fainted away, from the fatigue they had undergone in walking barefooted, to which they were so entirely unaccustomed. It was a long time before they could be brought to themselves. The queen of Damascus, extremely affected at their misfortune, sent some of her women to comfort them, with all kinds of refreshments, and wine to restore their strength, notwithstanding the prohibition of the caliph to afford them any assistance.

The queen's women found them still insensible, and not in a situation to be benefited by the relief which they brought them. They were, however, by means of proper applications, at last recovered. The mother of Ganem immediately expressed her sense of their kindness. "My good lady," said one of the queen's women, "your misfortunes affect us very sensibly; and our mistress, the queen of Syria, gave us great pleasure when she commissioned us to afford you all the assistance in our power. We can assure you that this princess takes great interest in your unhappy situation, as well as the king her husband." Ganem's mother begged that the queen's women would return their most grateful acknowledgments to that princess for her kindness to her and Alcolomb;

then addressing the lady who had spoken, she added : "The king, madam, has never told ~~me~~ why the Commander of the Faithful has sentenced us to suffer such cruel outrages ; let ~~me~~ beseech you to inform me what crimes we have committed." "My good lady," replied the queen's attendant, "your misfortunes originate with your son Ganem ; he is not dead, as you imagine. He is accused of having carried off the most beloved of the caliph's favourites ; and, as he has evaded the effects of the prince's resentment by a hasty flight, the punishment has fallen upon you. Every one condemns the violence of the caliph, but at the same time every one fears him ; and King Zinebi himself, as you perceive, does not dare to counteract his orders, through fear of his displeasure. Thus all we can do is to testify our compassion, and exhort you to patience."

"I know my son's disposition," said the mother of Ganem ; "I have taken great pains with his education, and have always brought him up with a strong sense of respect for the Commander of the Faithful. He has not committed the crime of which he is accused : I will be answerable for his innocence. I shall no longer murmur or complain, since it is for him I suffer, and since I know that he is not dead. Oh, Ganem," she exclaimed, transported by a mingled emotion of joy and tenderness, "my dear son, is it possible that you still exist ! I no longer regret the destruction of my property ; and to whatever excess the caliph may carry his rigour, I can pardon all, since Heaven has preserved my son. It is for my daughter only that I am afflicted ; her woes alone distress me : I believe her, however, to be so good a sister, as to be capable of following my example."

At these words, Alcolomb, who had till then appeared unmoved, turned towards her mother, and throwing her arms round her neck, "Yes, my dear mother," said she, "I will always follow your example, to whatever extremities your affection for my brother may lead you."

The mother and daughter, thus mingling their tears and sighs, remained tenderly locked in each other's arms for a considerable time. In the mean time the queen's women, who were much affected at the scene, said everything which might induce the mother of Ganem to take some refreshment. She eat a morsel only, merely to satisfy them, and Alcolomb did the same.

It being the caliph's order that the relations of Ganem should be exposed three days successively to the people in the situation which has been already described, Alcolomb and her mother again appeared as a public spectacle, for the second time, during the whole of the next day ; but things were now conducted in a very different manner : on this and the following day, the streets which before had been crowded with people, were deserted. The merchants, indignant at the treatment which the widow and daughter of Abou Aïbou had received, shut up their shops, and scrupulously avoided coming out of their houses. The women, instead of looking through their lattices, retired to the back part of their houses. Not a creature was to be seen in all the squares and streets through which these unfortunate women were obliged to pass ; it seemed as if the town had been abandoned by its inhabitants.

On the fourth day, Mohammed Zinebi, who wished faithfully to execute the caliph's orders, although he did not approve them, sent criers into all quarters of the city to publish to every citizen of Damascus, and also to all foreigners of whatsoever condition, that under pain of death, and of being afterwards thrown as food to the dogs, they should not presume to give shelter to the mother and sister of Ganem, or to furnish them with a morsel of bread or a drop of water : in a word, they were prohibited from affording them the smallest assistance, or from having any communication with them.

After the criers had executed the king's commands, that prince further

ordered that the mother and her daughter should be sent out of the palace, and be permitted to go whichever way they chose. They no sooner appeared than every one flew to avoid them, so strong was the impression made on the minds of the people by the proclamation they had heard. These unhappy women soon discovered that they were shunned by all, and being ignorant of the cause, they were much surprised at it; their astonishment was painfully increased, when, on entering one of the streets, they perceived among many others several of their particular friends, who, as soon as they appeared, fled with as much precipitation as the rest. "What," said the mother of Ganem, "are we infectious? Has the unjust and barbarous treatment we have received made us hateful to our fellow-citizens? Come, my child," continued she, "let us leave Damascus; do not let us stay another moment in a place where we create horror even in our best friends."

Impressed with these sentiments, these two unfortunate ladies reached one of the extremities of the town, and betook themselves to a miserable ruin, where they hoped to find shelter for the night; some Mussulmans, actuated by motives of charity and compassion, came as soon as it was dark to bring them some provisions, but they dared not stop a moment to console them, for fear of being discovered, and punished for disobeying the orders of the caliph.

In the meantime King Zinebi had dismissed a pigeon, in order that Haroun Alraschid might be informed of his punctual obedience. He made him acquainted at the same time with all that had passed, and begged to be instructed in what way he was to proceed in regard to the mother and sister of Ganem. He very soon received, by the same mode of conveyance, the caliph's answer, who desired that they might be for ever banished from Damascus. The king of Syria immediately sent people to the ruin where the mother and sister of Ganem had taken refuge, with orders to conduct them three day's journey from Damascus, and there to leave them, with a prohibition never to return to that city.

Zinebi's people performed their task; but being less exact than their master had been in executing the orders of Haroun Alraschid, they compassionately bestowed on Alcolomb and her mother some small pieces of money to procure them food: they also gave each of them a bag, which they put round their necks to hold their provisions.

In this deplorable state, they arrived at the first village from Damascus. The female peasants gathered round them, and as they could not help observing through their disguise that they were people of condition, they asked them what had obliged them to travel in a dress which evidently was not usual to them. Instead of answering these questions, they began to weep; this tended to increase the curiosity of the peasants, and at the same time to inspire them with compassion. The mother of Ganem related all that she and her daughter had suffered. The good villagers were moved at it, and endeavoured to console them; nor did they fail to entertain them in the best way their poverty would allow: they obliged them to take off their coverings of horsehair, which much incommoded them, and to put on other clothing, which they gave them, as also shoes, and something to cover their heads, in order to protect their hair.

After having heartily thanked the charitable peasants of this village, Alcolomb and her mother proceeded towards Aleppo by short journeys. They were accustomed to retire near the mosques or into them towards dusk, and there they passed the night upon the mats which covered the pavement, if there were any; otherwise they laid down upon the pavement itself, or lodged in one of those public places which are intended to serve as an asylum for travellers. With regard to food, they were sufficiently supplied, as they often came to

places where bread, boiled rice, and other food was distributed to any traveller who asked for it.

They at last arrived at Aleppo; but they did not choose to stay there, and continuing their way towards the Euphrates, they crossed that river, and entered into Mesopotamia, which they penetrated as far as Moussoul. From thence, much as they had suffered, they proceeded to Bagdad. That was the place whither all their desires tended, in the hope of meeting with Ganem, although they ought not to have flattered themselves that he could be in the same town in which the caliph resided; but they hoped it, because they wished it. But we must here leave Alcolomb and her mother, and return to Fetnab.

This lady had been strictly confined in the dark tower from the day which proved so fatal to her and Ganem. However disagreeable her prison might be, she was less distressed by her own sufferings than at Ganem's, the uncertainty of whose fate caused her the most poignant anguish, and there was scarcely a moment in which she ceased to lament his sad destiny.

One night, when the caliph was walking alone round his palace, as was his usual custom—for this prince possessed a large share of curiosity, and sometimes learned in his nocturnal excursion, matters which passed in his palace, and which would never otherwise have come to his knowledge;—one night, then, he passed in his walk near the dark tower, and thinking he heard some one speak, he stopped; approaching the door in order to listen, he distinctly heard these words, which Fetnab, still a prey to grief at the remembrance of Ganem, uttered very intelligibly: "O Ganem, too unhappy Ganem! what is become of thee? whither hath thine unfortunate destiny conducted thee? Alas! I have been the unhappy cause of thy misfortunes! Why didst thou not rather leave me to perish miserably than afford me thy generous assistance? What a sad reward hast thou received for all thine attentions and respect! The Commander of the Faithful, who ought to recompense thee, becomes thy persecutor; in requital for having always regarded me as consecrated to him, thou art bereft of all thy property, and art obliged to seek thy safety in flight. Ah, caliph! barbarous caliph! what defence wilt thou make when thou shalt appear with Ganem before the awful tribunal of the Supreme Judge, and when the angels shall, in thy presence, bear testimony of the truth? All thy present power, before which half the earth trembles, will not then save thee from the condemnation and punishment due to thy unjust violence." Here Fetnab ceased to speak, sighs and tears having stopped her utterance.

What he now heard was sufficient to make the caliph reflect upon his conduct. He clearly perceived, that if what Fetnab said was true, she must of necessity be innocent, and that he had been too precipitate in the orders he had issued against Ganem and his family. In order to investigate thoroughly an affair in which his character for equity—a point upon which he much prided himself—seemed to be involved, he instantly returned towards his apartment, and as soon as he had entered it, he ordered Mesrour to go to the dark tower and bring Fetnab before him.

The chief of the eunuchs inferred from this order, and still more from the caliph's manner, that he intended to pardon and recall his favourite: he was delighted at the supposition, as he loved Fetnab, and was much concerned at her disgrace. He instantly hastened to the tower: "Madam," said he, in a tone expressive of the satisfaction he felt, "have the goodness to follow me: I hope you will never again return to this gloomy, dismal place; the Commander of the Faithful wishes to converse with you, and I augur well of this disposition."

Fetnab followed Mesrour, who conducted and introduced her into the caliph's cabinet. She immediately fell prostrate before the prince, and

remained in that posture with her face bathed in tears. "Fetnab," said the caliph, without desiring her to rise, "it appears you accuse me of violence and injustice : tell me who is this man that, in spite of the respect and attention he has preserved towards me, is reduced to so dreadful a situation ? Speak ; you know that I am naturally well disposed, and inclined to do justice."

The favourite understood by what the caliph said, that he had overheard her ; and taking advantage of so excellent an opportunity of justifying her beloved Ganem—"Commander of the Faithful," she replied, "if any expression has escaped me which displeases your majesty, I humbly entreat your pardon. Ganem, the unfortunate son of Abou Aïbou, a merchant of Damascus, is the man with whose innocence and sufferings you desire to be made acquainted. It is he who saved my life, and gave me an asylum in his house. I will confess that, when he first saw me, he might perhaps entertain the idea of devoting himself to me, in the hopes that I would repay his attention ; this, at least, I inferred from the earnestness he betrayed in my behalf, and from the eagerness he showed to render me every assistance of which I stood in need from my situation. But as soon as he was aware that I had the honour to belong to you, 'Ah, madam,' said he, 'what belongs to the master is forbidden to the slave.' I must do him the justice to say, that his conduct from that moment never belied his words. At the same time you know, Commander of the Faithful, with what rigour you have treated him—a rigour you will have to answer for before the tribunal of God."

The caliph was not displeased with Fetnab for the freedom she used in expressing her sentiments : "But," rejoined he, "can I rely on the assurances you give me of Ganem's honour ?" "Yes," replied she, "you may ; I would not, on any account whatever, disguise from you the truth : and to prove that I am sincere, I will make a confession which will perhaps displease you, but I solicit beforehand your majesty's forgiveness." "Speak, daughter," said Haroun Alraschid ; "I freely pardon you, provided you conceal nothing from me." "Well, then," replied Fetnab, "know that the respectful attentions of Ganem, added to the essential services he rendered me, led me to esteem him very highly ; I even went further : you, sire, have experienced the tyranny of love ; I felt that he inspired me with the tenderest sentiments ; he perceived it, but far from profiting by my weakness, and notwithstanding the ardour of his passion, he continued firm in his duty. All that his regard for me ever drew from him were the words I have already repeated to your majesty : 'what belongs to the master is forbidden to the slave.'"

This ingenious confession would perhaps have irritated any other than the caliph, but it completely softened this prince. He commanded her to rise, and seating her near him, desired her to relate her history from beginning to end : in this she acquitted herself with much spirit and address. She passed slightly over what regarded Zobeïde : she enlarged more upon her obligations to Ganem, upon the expense he had been at on her account ; and she particularly dwelt on his discretion, wishing by that means to make the caliph understand that she was under the necessity of being concealed in Ganem's house, in order to deceive Zobeïde. She concluded with the flight of the young merchant, to which she frankly told the caliph she had advised him, in order to avoid the effects of his displeasure.

When she had finished, the prince said to her, "I believe all you have told me ; but why did you so long delay to give me some intelligence of yourself ? Was it necessary to wait a whole month after my return before you informed me where you were ?" "Commander of the Faithful," replied Fetnab, "Ganem so seldom went out of his house, that it is, by no means a matter which ought to surprise you that we were not the first to hear of your return. Besides, it was

a long time before he could find a favourable opportunity of delivering the note I had written, and of which he took charge, into the hands of Nouronnihar."

"It is enough, Fetnab," replied the caliph; "I acknowledge my error, and am willing to repair it by conferring every benefit in my power upon this young merchant. See, then, how much I will do; ask for him what you will, I will grant it." At these words the favourite threw herself at the caliph's feet, bowing her face to the ground, and then raising herself—"Commander of the Faithful," said she, "after first returning your majesty my sincere thanks for Ganem, I humbly beseech you to order it to be proclaimed throughout your dominions that you pardon the son of Abou Aïbou, and that he has only to present himself before you." "I will do more," replied the prince. "In order to reward him for having preserved your life, and for the respect he has maintained towards me, and also to make him amends for the loss of his property, and repair the injury his family has sustained, I bestow you upon him for a wife." Fetnab was unable to find words which could sufficiently express her gratitude to the caliph for his generosity. She now retired into the apartment she had occupied before her unfortunate adventure. The same furniture remained in it, nothing had been touched: but what gave her the most pleasure was to find the chests and packages belonging to Ganem, which Mesrour had taken care to have conveyed there.

The next day, Haroun Alraschid gave orders to the grand vizier to have it proclaimed in every town of his dominions, that he pardoned Ganem, the son of Abou Aïbou; but this proclamation was without effect, for a considerable time passed, and nothing was heard of this young merchant. Fetnab thought that he certainly could not survive the misery of having lost her: the most anxious inquietude took possession of her mind; but hope is the last thing that abandons lovers: she begged the caliph's permission to go herself in search of Ganem; which having obtained, she took out of her casket a purse containing a thousand pieces of gold, and left the palace one morning, mounted upon a mule very richly caparisoned, with which she was provided from the stables of the caliph. Two black eunuchs attended her, one on each side laying his hand on the mule's back.

She went from mosque to mosque distributing alms to devout people of the Mussulman religion, imploring their prayers for the accomplishment of an important affair, on which she told them the happiness of two individuals depended. She employed the whole day and her thousand pieces of gold in acts of charity at the mosques, and in the evening returned to the palace.

The following day she took another purse containing the same sum, and with the same attendants repaired to the place where the jewellers were accustomed to assemble. She stopped at the entrance, and without dismounting, ordered one of the black eunuchs to desire the syndic to come and speak with her. The syndic, who was a very charitable man, and who expended more than two-thirds of his income in relieving such poor foreigners as were either afflicted with sickness or any way distressed in their affairs, attended on Fetnab immediately, whom he knew by her dress to be a lady belonging to the palace. "I apply to you," said she, putting her purse into his hands, "as a man whose piety is much commended through the whole city. I beg of you to distribute these pieces of gold among such poor objects as you are accustomed to assist; for I am not ignorant that it is your laudable practice to succour the distresses of all foreigners who apply to you for charity. I know, too, that you are even anxious to anticipate their wants, and that nothing is more grateful to you than to find occasions of relieving distress." "Madam," replied the syndic, "I shall execute your commands with pleasure; but if you are desirous of exercising your charity with your own hands, and will take the trouble of coming to my

house, you will there see two women worthy of all your compassion. I met them yesterday as they entered the town; they were in a most miserable state, and I was the more affected at it, as they appeared to be people of condition. It was easy to discover through the wretched rags which covered them, and in spite of all the injury their complexion had received from the heat of the sun, that air of superiority that I have rarely met with in those poor objects to whom I have extended my aid. I conducted them both to my house, and placed them under the care of my wife, who formed the same judgment of them that I had done. She ordered her slaves to prepare good beds, while she employed herself in assisting them to wash their faces, and in providing a change of linen. We do not yet know who they are, because we wished them to take some repose before we fatigued them with questions."

Fetnab felt a curiosity to see them which she could not well account for. The syndic thought it his duty to attend her to his house, but she would not suffer him to take the trouble, and was conducted to it by one of his slaves. Being arrived at the door she alighted from her mule, and followed the syndic's slave, who entered first to announce her to his mistress, whom he found in the apartment occupied by Alcolomb and her mother; for these were the women of whom the syndic had been speaking to Fetnab.

The syndic's wife, having learnt from her slave that one of the ladies of the palace was in the house, was coming out of the chamber to receive her, but Fetnab followed the slave so close as not to give her time, and entered the apartment. The syndic's wife prostrated herself before her, as a mark of her respect towards everything which belonged to the caliph. Fetnab raised her, and said—"My good lady, I entreat your permission to speak to the two strangers who arrived at Bagdad last night." "Madam," replied the wife of the syndic, "they are now lying in the two little beds which you see standing together." The favourite immediately approached that in which the mother was, and looking at her attentively—"My good woman," said she, "I am come to offer you some assistance; I am not without interest in this city, and may perhaps be useful to you and your companion." "I see, madam," replied the mother of Ganem, "by your kind offer of assistance, that Heaven has not yet abandoned us. We have had reason to fear it after all we have suffered." When she finished these words, she began to weep so bitterly that Fetnab and the wife of the syndic could not refrain from tears.

The caliph's favourite, drying her eyes, said to the mother of Ganem, "I beseech you to relate to us the history of your life and misfortunes; you cannot do it to people more disposed to use every effort in their power to console and assist you." "Madam," replied the unfortunate widow of Abou Aïbou, "it is a favourite of the Commander of the Faithful, a lady called Fetnab, who is the cause of all our sufferings." The favourite was thunderstruck at this declaration; but dissembling her confusion and agitation, she did not interrupt the mother of Ganem, who proceeded as follows: "I am the widow of Abou Aïbou, a merchant of Damascus; I had a son called Ganem, who being brought by his business to Bagdad, was accused there of carrying off this Fetnab. The caliph caused him to be sought for, in order to put him to death; and not being able to find him, wrote to the king of Damascus to order our house to be plundered and destroyed; to have my daughter and myself exposed naked to the people for three successive days; and then that we should be both banished for ever out of Syria. But with whatever indignity we have been treated, I could still be happy if my son lives, and I could again meet with him. What delight would it be to me and to his sister to behold him once more! In embracing him we should forget the loss of our property, and all we have suffered on his account. Alas! I am persuaded that if he is the

cause, he is the innocent cause of our misfortunes, and that he is as free from guilt towards the caliph as his sister and myself." "No, undoubtedly," interrupted Fetnab, "he is no more criminal than you are. I can assert his innocence, because I am that very Fetnab of whom you have so much reason to complain. It is my unhappy fate to have caused all your distresses. It is to me you must impute the loss of your son, if he really is no more; but if I have been the cause of your sufferings, I have also the power to alleviate them. I have already justified Ganem in the sight of the caliph: that prince has proclaimed a pardon throughout his dominions to the son of Abou Aïbou; and be assured, he will now serve you as effectually as he has before injured you: you are no longer his enemies. He only waits for the arrival of Ganem to reward him for the important service he has rendered me, by uniting our fates for ever: he intends to give me to him as his wife. Look upon me then as your daughter, and permit me to assure you of my eternal friendship." As she said this, she affectionately embraced the mother of Ganem, whose astonishment rendered her unable to answer. Fetnab only left her to fly to the other bed to embrace Alcolomb, who sat up extending her arms to receive her.

The charming favourite of the caliph, after having lavished upon the mother and daughter every mark of tenderness and affection which they might expect from the wife of Ganem, said, "Afflict yourselves no longer; the rich effects which Ganem had in this city are not lost; they are safe in my apartment in the caliph's palace. I am well aware that all the treasures in the world could not console you for the loss of Ganem: at least, I judge of the feelings of his mother and sister by my own. Consanguinity is not less powerful than love in exalted minds. Do not let us despair of seeing him again. We shall find him; the good fortune I experience in having thus met with you gives me the greater encouragement to entertain hopes. Perhaps this very day may be the last of your misfortunes, and the commencement of still greater happiness than you enjoyed at Damascus before Ganem quitted you."

Fetnab was proceeding, when the syndic of the jewellers arrived: "Madam," said he, "I have just been witness to a very affecting spectacle. It is a young man whom a camel-driver has brought to the hospital at Bagdad. He was fastened with cords upon the camel, not having sufficient strength to support himself. They had just unbound him, and were about to carry him to the hospital as I passed. I approached the young man and looked at him attentively, and it struck me that his face was not entirely unknown to me. I asked some questions relative to his family, but I could not draw from him any other answer than sighs and tears. I took pity on him, and knowing, from the habit I am in of seeing sick persons, that there was urgent necessity for him to be immediately taken care of, I would not suffer him to be left at the hospital, well knowing the manner in which the sick are attended to in those places, and the incapacity of the physicians. I ordered him to be brought hither by my slaves, who have placed him in a separate apartment, and given him by my desire some of my own linen, and they attend him in the same manner as I should be attended myself."

Fetnab started on hearing this relation, and felt an emotion she could not account for. "Show me," said she to the syndic, "into the sick man's chamber; I must see him." The syndic immediately conducted her there, and whilst she was gone, Ganem's mother said to Alcolomb: "Ah! daughter, however miserable the situation of this sick stranger may be, it is most likely that your unhappy brother, if he be still alive, is in as bad a condition."

The favourite of the caliph, as soon as she entered the sick man's apartment, approached the bed where the syndic's slave had placed him. She saw a young man, whose eyes were closed, his face pale and disfigured, and bathed in tears: your charming

she looked at him attentively, her heart palpitated, she thought she discovered the countenance of Ganem ; but then distrusted her eyes. If in some respects she found a resemblance to him in the object before her, in others he appeared so different, that she durst not flatter herself it could be Ganem whom she beheld. Not being able to resist her desire of being satisfied on this subject, "Ganem," said she, with a trembling voice, "is it you I see?" At these words she stopped, in order to give him time to answer, but perceiving that he remained apparently insensible, "O Ganem, I do not then address myself to you ! my imagination, too strongly impressed with your image, has painted the deceitful resemblance on this stranger. No malady could render the son of Abou Aibou deaf to the voice of Fetnab." At the name of Fetnab, Ganem (for it was no other) raised his eyes, and turned his head towards the person who addressed him ; and recognising the favourite of the caliph, "Ah, madam," said he, "can it be you ? By what miracle—" he could not go on, his emotions of joy overpowered him, and he fainted. Fetnab and the syndic eagerly flew to his assistance ; but as soon as he showed signs of recovery, the syndic begged the lady to retire, fearing lest the sight of her should increase Ganem's disorder.

The young man having recovered his senses, looked around, and not perceiving her he sought, "Beautiful Fetnab," cried he, "where are you ? Did you not present yourself before me, or was it only an illusion ?" "No, sir," said the syndic, "it is no illusion ; I begged the lady to retire, but you shall see her as soon as you are in a condition to bear an interview. You now stand in need of repose, and nothing must prevent your taking it. Your affairs now wear a much better aspect, for I believe you to be the same Ganem for whom the Commander of the Faithful has caused a pardon for past offences to be proclaimed in Bagdad. Be satisfied for the present with this intelligence. The lady who has just been with you will in due time give you more ample information. Think of nothing at present but the re-establishment of your health ; it shall be my business to do everything in my power to contribute towards it." When he had said this, he left Ganem to his repose, and went to order whatever was necessary to restore his strength, exhausted as he was by want and fatigue.

During this time, Fetnab was in the apartment of Alcolomb and her mother, where nearly the same scene passed ; for when Ganem's mother heard that the sick stranger whom the syndic had brought to his house was Ganem himself, she was so overjoyed, that she also fainted away. And when the care and attention of Fetnab and the syndic's wife had brought her to herself, she instantly wished to rise and go to her son ; but the syndic, who arrived during these transactions, prevented her, by representing that Ganem was so weak and emaciated, that his life would be endangered by exciting in him emotions so violent as the unexpected sight of a beloved mother and sister must occasion. There was no necessity for the syndic to use any stronger arguments to persuade the mother of Ganem to desist from her purpose. Fetnab now exclaimed, "Blessed be Heaven for bringing us together in the same place ! I shall now return to the palace, and acquaint the caliph with these events, and to-morrow morning I will be with you again." She then embraced the mother and daughter, and went away.

As soon as she arrived at the palace, she demanded a private audience of the caliph, which she instantly obtained. She was introduced into the prince's cabinet, where he was alone. She immediately threw herself at his feet, bowing her head to the ground, according to the usual custom. He desired her to rise and be seated, and then asked her if she had heard anything of Ganem. "Commander of the Faithful," said she, "I have succeeded so well as to have

found him, and his mother and sister also." The caliph was curious to know how she could have discovered them in so short a time. She satisfied his curiosity, and spoke so handsomely of the mother of Ganem and of Alcolomb, that he had a great desire to see them, as well as the young merchant.

If Haroun Alraschid was at times violent, and allowed himself to be carried away by the heat of passion to commit acts of cruelty, yet he was in his nature the most equitable and generous prince alive as soon as his anger was appeased, and he became sensible of his injustice. Being convinced that he had unjustly persecuted Ganem and his family, and that he had publicly injured them, he resolved upon giving them public satisfaction. "I am delighted," said he to Fetnab, "that you have been so fortunate in making this discovery; I am rejoiced at it less on your account than on my own. I will punctually keep the promise I have given you: you shall marry Ganem; and I declare, that from this moment you are no longer my slave, you are now free. Return to the young merchant, and as soon as his health is re-established bring him to me, with his mother and sister."

Fetnab did not fail, very early the next morning, to repair to the syndic of the jewellers, impatient to learn the state of Ganem's health, and to communicate to the mother and daughter the good fortune which awaited them. The first person she met was the syndic, who told her that Ganem had passed a very good night; that as his disorder arose entirely from melancholy, and the cause was now removed, he would very soon recover.

The son of Abou Aïbou was in reality much better. Repose, the excellent remedies he had taken, and, more than all, the effect produced on his mind by the happy change in his situation, were so efficacious, that the syndic was of opinion he might with safety see his mother, sister, and mistress, provided he was prepared for the interview; for it was much to be feared, that, being wholly ignorant of the arrival of his mother and sister at Bagdad, his surprise and joy at the sight of them might be attended with bad consequences. It was determined, therefore, that Fetnab should first enter Ganem's apartment alone, and should make a sign to the two other ladies to enter when she judged it proper.

Things being thus arranged, Fetnab was introduced by the syndic to the sick man, who was so overjoyed at the sight of her, as again to be very near fainting. "Well, Ganem," said she, approaching his bed, "you see your Fetnab again, whom you imagined to be lost to you for ever." "Ah! madam," interrupted he, eagerly, "by what miracle do you again bless my sight? I thought you had been in the palace of the caliph; no doubt the prince has listened to you; you have done away his suspicions, and are restored to his affection." "Yes, my dear Ganem," replied Fetnab, "I am justified in the opinion of the Commander of the Faithful, who in order to repair the evils he has made you sustain, bestows me on you in marriage." The last words gave Ganem such extreme delight, as to make him incapable at first of manifesting his joy otherwise than by the expressive and tender silence so well known to lovers. But he at last interrupted it: "Ah! beautiful Fetnab," he exclaimed, "may I give credit to what you tell me? Can I believe that the caliph really gives you up to the son of Abou Aïbou?" "Nothing is more certain," replied the lady; "this prince, who was lately so desirous to take away your life, and who, in his anger, has made your mother and sister suffer a thousand indignities, now wishes to see you, in order to reward the respect you have shown towards him; and there is no doubt of his giving ample proofs of his kindness to your whole family."

Ganem desired to know in what manner the caliph had ill-treated his mother and sister, which Fetnab immediately related to him. He could not hear so

sad a story without tears, notwithstanding the happy state of his mind from the recent communication of his approaching marriage with his beloved mistress. But when Fetnab told him they were actually at Bagdad, and moreover in the same house with him, he showed such extreme impatience to see them, that Fetnab could no longer delay the gratification he so anxiously wished. She immediately called them; they were at the door, waiting the happy moment. They entered, ran towards Ganem, and embracing him by turns, kissed him again and again. How many were the tears shed in the midst of these embraces! Ganem's countenance, as well as that of his mother and sister, was bedewed with them. Fetnab also wept abundantly, even the syndic and his wife were unable to refrain at so affecting a spectacle, nor could they enough admire the secret ways of Providence, which had thus brought together four persons, whose fortune had so cruelly separated.

After they had wiped away their tears, Ganem again caused them to flow, by the account he gave of all he had suffered, from the day he left Fetnab to the moment when the syndic had brought him to his house. He told them, that having taken refuge in a small village, he had there fallen ill, that some charitable peasants had taken care of him, but as he exhibited no signs of recovery, he was given in charge to a camel driver to be conveyed to the hospital at Bagdad. Fetnab also recounted the inconveniences she had sustained in her prison, and the accident of the caliph's overhearing her in the tower, and of his sending for her into his cabinet, not omitting the conversation which restored her to his good opinion. At last, when they had all informed each other of whatever had respectively befallen them, "Let us thank Heaven," said Fetnab, "for having thus united us, and think only of the happiness that now awaits us. As soon as Ganem's health is re-established, it will be necessary for him to appear before the caliph with his mother and sister, but as they are not at present in a condition to make a suitable appearance, I must undertake to remove this obstacle, and therefore beg you will excuse me for a moment."

Saying these words she left the room, and went immediately to the palace, whence she soon returned to the syndic's house with another purse, containing a thousand pieces of gold. She gave it to the syndic, begging him to purchase proper dresses for Alcolomb and her mother. The syndic, who was a man of great taste, chose very elegant materials, and had them made up with all possible expedition. They were ready in three days, and Ganem finding himself sufficiently recovered prepared for the important visit. But on the day which he had fixed upon to attend the caliph, as he, his mother, and sister, were making the necessary preparations, the grand vizier Gialar arrived at the house of the syndic.

The minister was on horseback, attended by a long train of officers. "My lord," said he to Ganem, as he entered, "I come from the Commander of the Faithful, your master and mine; the commission with which I am now intrusted is very different from that which I do not wish to call to your remembrance. I am ordered to accompany and present you to the caliph, who much wishes to see you." Ganem replied to the civilities of the grand vizier only by a profound inclination of his head, he then mounted a horse which had been brought for him from the stables of the caliph, in the management of which he showed very great dexterity and grace. The mother and daughter were placed on mules brought from the palace; and whilst Fetnab, mounted also on a mule, proceeded with them to the residence of the caliph by a private way, Gialar conducted Ganem by another road, and introduced him to the hall of audience.

When the grand vizier had brought Ganem to the foot of the throne, the

young merchant made his obeisance, by throwing himself with his face to the ground ; then rising, he addressed an elegant compliment, in verse, to the caliph, which, though composed at the moment, gained the applause of the whole court. When he had finished his speech, the caliph desired him to approach, and said, "I am most happy to see you, and shall be glad to learn from yourself where you found my favourite, and all that you have done to serve her." Ganem obeyed, and appeared to speak so entirely without disguise, that the caliph was convinced of his sincerity. The prince ordered a very rich robe to be presented to him, according to the custom always observed towards those to whom audience is given. He then said, "Ganem, I much wish you to remain in my court." "Commander of the Faithful," replied the young merchant, "the slave has no other will than that of his master, on whom his life and fortune depend." The caliph was well satisfied with Ganem's answer, and gave him a large pension. After this, the prince descended from his throne, and ordering Ganem and the grand vizier only to follow him, he entered his own apartment.

As he did not doubt that Fetnab was at the palace with the widow and daughter of Abou Aibou, he ordered them to be introduced. They prostrated themselves before him. He desired them to rise, and was so struck with the beauty of Alcolomb, that, after having looked at her with great attention, he said, "I am so much concerned at having treated your charms so unworthily, that I think some reparation due to them, which may exceed the offence I have committed. I take you for my wife, and by that means I shall punish Zobeide, who will thus become the remote cause of your happiness, as she has been of your misfortunes. This is not all," added he, turning towards the mother of Ganem ; "you, madam, are still young, and will not disdain an alliance with my grand vizier. I give you to Giafar ; and you, Fetnab, to Ganem. Let a cadi and witnesses be brought hither, and let the three contracts be immediately drawn up and signed." Ganem represented to the caliph that his sister would be too much honoured in being ranked among the number of his favourites ; but the prince was determined to marry her.

After Scheherazadè had finished the history of Ganem, the son of Abou Aibou, the sultan of the Indies expressed how much pleasure he had received from the relation. "Sire," said the sultana, "since this history has amused you, I humbly entreat that your majesty would listen to one of Prince Zeyn Alasnam and the king of the Genii ; you will not be less satisfied with it." Schahriar consented ; but as the day began to dawn, it was deferred to the following night. The sultana then began as follows :

THE HISTORY OF PRINCE ZEYN ALASNAM AND OF THE KING OF THE GENII.

THERE was formerly a king of Balsora, who possessed immense riches, and was greatly beloved by his subjects ; but he had no children, and this caused him great affliction. All the holy men of his kingdom were engaged by very considerable donations to petition Heaven to grant him a son ; nor were their prayers ineffectual : the queen became pregnant, and was in due time safely delivered of a prince, who was named Zeyn Alasman, which means the Beauty of Statues.

The king called an assembly of all the astrologers in his kingdom, and ordered them to calculate the nativity of his child. They discovered by their

observations that his life would be long; that he would be of a firm and courageous temper; but that he would need all his courage to sustain with fortitude the evils that threatened him. The king was not disconcerted at this prediction. "My son," said he, "will have no reason to complain, since he will possess courage: it is good for princes to experience misfortune. Adversity purifies virtue; it makes them the better acquainted with the duties of government."

Having rewarded the astrologers, he dismissed them. The young prince was brought up with all the care imaginable; masters of every sort were provided, as soon as he was of an age to profit by their instructions. It was, in short, the determined purpose of his father to give to the world a prince completely accomplished, when the good king was very suddenly attacked by an incurable disease. Perceiving himself on his death-bed, he called his son to his side, whom he recommended, among other things, to make himself beloved rather than feared by his people; never to lend an ear to flatterers; and to be equally slow in rewarding as in punishing, since it frequently happened that kings, seduced by false appearances, heaped benefits on the bad, and oppressed the good.

Prince Zeyn, immediately on the king's death, clothed himself in mourning, which he continued to wear for seven days. On the eighth, he ascended the throne, removed his father's seal from the royal treasury, and put his own in its place, and began to taste all the sweets of empire. The pleasure of seeing his courtiers bend before him, to behold them engaged in no other study than to prove their obedience and zeal; in one word, the charms of sovereign power had taken firm possession of his mind. He thought only of the duties which his subjects owed him, without reflecting on the important ones which they had a right to claim in return. He gave himself little concern about the affairs of government, but plunged into all sorts of debauchery with a set of voluptuous young men, on whom he conferred all the first offices of the state. As he was naturally prodigal, and put no restraint whatever upon his bounties, it soon followed that women and favourites had insensibly exhausted his treasures.

The queen his mother, who was a princess of great wisdom and prudence, attempted, though unsuccessfully, to check the libertine courses of the king her son, by representing to him that unless he soon changed his conduct, he would not only dissipate his riches, but completely alienate the affection of his people, and bring on a revolution, which might cost him both his crown and life. What she predicted had nearly taken place; the people began to murmur against the government; and their murmurs would have infallibly produced a general revolt if the queen had not had the address to prevent it; but this princess, informed of the unhappy state of affairs, admonished the king of it in such serious terms, that he at last allowed himself to be convinced. He dismissed his vicious companions from all share in the ministry, and supplied their places by sage old men, who knew how to keep his subjects within their duty.

In the meantime, finding all his riches dissipated, he began to repent that he had made no better use of them. He fell into a profound melancholy, which nothing could divert; when one night an old man appeared to him in a dream, and advancing towards him with a smiling countenance, addressed him as follows: "Know, O Zeyn, that there is no sorrow which may not be succeeded by joy; no misfortune, but what may draw happiness in its train. If you wish to see the end of your affliction, arise, depart for Egypt, visit Cairo, where good fortune attends you."

The prince, when he awoke, was much struck with this dream. He spoke of it very seriously to the queen his mother, who was disposed to treat it

ludicrously. "You would not surely, my son," said she, "travel to Egypt on the faith of a dream." "And why not, madam?" replied Zeyn; "do you imagine that all dreams are mere chimeras, or casual impressions on the brain? No, no; he assured some of them are of an important and mysterious nature. My preceptors have related to me a thousand histories which do not allow me to doubt of it. Besides, even if I were not persuaded of this, I could not avoid giving attention to my own dream. The old man who appeared to me bore evident marks of something supernatural; he was not one of those whom age alone renders respectable; there was I know not what air of divinity diffused over his whole person. He was, in short, precisely such as our great prophet is represented; and, if you wish that I should give you my opinion, I believe that it is he himself, who, touched by my griefs, wishes to alleviate them. I am disposed to put a full reliance in the hopes he has inspired me with; I confide in his promises, and am resolved to obey his voice." The queen attempted to dissuade him from his purpose, but was unable to succeed. The prince, having left to her the care of his kingdom, quitted the palace one night very secretly, and took the road to Cairo unaccompanied by any one.

After sustaining much pain and fatigue, he arrived at this famous city, with which, either in extent or beauty, few can compare. He alighted at the door of a mosque, where finding himself overcome with weariness, he lay down to rest. Scarcely had he fallen asleep, when he saw the same old man, who said to him, "O my son, I am fully satisfied with you. You have relied on my words. You have arrived hither without suffering the length or difficulties of the way to abate your resolution; but learn that I have engaged you in this long journey merely to prove you. I see that you have courage and firmness. You deserve to be rendered the most rich and happy prince in the whole world. Return to Balsora; you will find in your palace immense riches, such as no king has ever possessed."

The prince was by no means satisfied with this dream. "Alas!" said he to himself after he awoke, "how great is my error! this old man, whom I believed to be our venerable prophet, is nothing then but the creature of a troubled imagination. Having had my fancy so much possessed with him, it is not wonderful that I should see him a second time. I will return to Balsora, for what should I do here any longer? I am glad, however, that I did not communicate to any one but my mother the occasion of my journey. Were it known, I should become the mockery of my people."

He then retook the road to Balsora; and as soon as he was arrived there, the queen asked him if he returned contented? He related to her everything that had happened, and appeared so much mortified at having shown himself so credulous, that this princess, instead of increasing his chagrin by raillery or reproaches, endeavoured to console him. "Cease to afflict yourself, my son," she said to him; "if God destines you riches, you will acquire them without effort: all that I have to recommend to you is to be virtuous. Renounce the vain delights of dancing, of music, and of purple-coloured wine. Fly these destructive pleasures; they have already nearly ruined you. Strive rather to render your subjects happy: in effecting their good, you will secure your own."

Zeyn protested that in future he would follow the counsels of his mother and of those sage viriers whom he had made choice of to sustain the weight of government. In the first night, however, after his return to his palace, he again, for the third time, saw the old man in a dream, who said to him, "Valiant Zeyn, the time of your prosperity is at length arrived. To-morrow morning, as soon as you rise, take a pickaxe and dig with it in the cabinet of the deceased king; you will there discover a great treasure."

The prince was no sooner awake than he rose from his bed, and running to the queen's apartment, related to her with much earnestness the dream he had just had. "Really, son," said the queen, smiling, "this is a most obstinate old man; he is not content with having deceived you twice; are you in a humour to trust him again?" "No, madam," replied Zeyn, "I believe nothing of what he has said to me; but still from curiosity I am anxious to pay a visit to my father's cabinet." "Oh! I doubt it not in the least," exclaimed the queen in a fit of laughter. "Go my son, satisfy yourself; it is a great comfort to me that your present adventure is not altogether so fatiguing as a journey to Egypt."

"Well! madam," replied the king, "I must confess to you, that this third dream has revived my confidence; it is so evidently connected with the two former ones. For let us examine all the words of the old man. He first commanded me to go to Egypt: he there told me, that he had ordered me to take the journey merely to give proof of my courage and resolution. 'Return,' said he, 'then, to Balsora; it is there that you will discover treasures.' He has this night pointed out to me the precise spot where they are. In these three dreams there is, as it appears to me, a manifest unity of design; they have nothing equivocal about them; not a single circumstance to create embarrassment. They may indeed be wholly visionary; but I would rather make a useless search, than have occasion to reproach myself all my life for having, it may be, failed of obtaining great riches because I chose to indulge myself, very unadvisedly, in the pride of disbelief."

Having thus spoken, he left the queen's apartment, and being provided with a proper instrument, entered alone into the cabinet of the deceased king. He immediately began his work, and raised more than half the squares of the pavement without perceiving the least appearance of treasure. He left off for a moment to rest himself, saying in his heart, "I extremely fear that my mother will have reason to laugh at me." However, he resumed his courage and continued his labour. He had no cause to repent: discovering on a sudden a white stone, he eagerly raised it, and found beneath it a door, secured by a steel padlock. He broke this with the instrument in his hand, and opened the door, under which was a staircase of white marble. With the aid of a wax taper, which he then lighted, he descended by this staircase into a chamber inlaid with porcelain of China, having its ceiling and floor of crystal. But what particularly seized his attention were four shelves, upon every one of which were ten urns of porphyry. He supposed them to be full of wine. "Good!" says he, "this wine must be very old, and I doubt not is excellent." He approached one of the urns and took off the lid, when with equal surprise and joy he observed the vessel to be full of gold. He examined all the urns on the four shelves one after another, and found them full of sequins. He took a handful of them, which he carried to the queen.

This princess felt all the astonishment that may be imagined when she heard the king's account of what he had seen. "O my son," she exclaimed, "take care not to dissipate these riches in that inconsiderate manner in which you have already wasted the royal treasure; let not your enemies have so fair an occasion to exult." "No, madam," replied Zeyn; "I shall hereafter live in a manner that will not displease you."

The queen requested of the king her son to conduct her to this astonishing vault, which her departed husband had caused to be made so very secretly, and she had never heard of it, or entertained a suspicion of its existence. They set accompanied her to the cabinet, and having assisted her in descending the marble staircase, led her to the apartment which contained the vault. She observed everything with an eye of extreme curiosity, and remarked their horses.

of the room a small urn of the same materials as the rest, which the prince had not seen. He then took it in his hand, and having opened it, found within a small golden key. "My son," said the queen to him, "this is without doubt the key of some new treasure. Let us search diligently, and if possible discover the use for which it is intended."

They examined the room with the greatest attention, and at length discovered, in the middle of one of the panels of the wainscot, a lock, which they immediately supposed was that to which the key belonged. The king did not delay to make trial of it, when the door opened in an instant, and another apartment presented itself to their view, in the middle of which were nine pedestals of massive gold, eight of which supported each a statue made of a single diamond, the splendour of which was so great as completely to illuminate the room.

"O heavens!" cried Zeyn, extremely surprised, "where could my father possibly find anything so rare and beautiful as these statues?" The ninth pedestal increased his astonishment; for above it was placed a piece of white satin on which were written these words: "My son, to acquire these eight statues has been a work of great labour; but beautiful as they may appear, know that there is in the world a ninth statue, which greatly excels them; it is in itself of a thousand times greater value than all you behold. If you wish to make yourself master of it, repair to the city of Cairo, in Egypt, where resides one of my old slaves called Mobarec; you will have no trouble in finding him: the first person you meet will inform you of his abode. Go to him and tell him what has happened. He will know you to be my son, and will conduct you to the place where this marvellous statue is to be found, and instruct you how to obtain it with safety."

The prince, after having read these words, said to the queen, "I am very desirous to obtain this ninth statue: it must be a piece of unheard-of excellence, since all these together do not equal it in value. I am resolved to set off for Grand Cairo; nor do I believe, madam, that you will wish to dissuade me from my purpose." "No, son," replied the queen, "I have nothing to oppose; you are evidently under the direction of our great prophet, who will not permit you to perish in the journey. Depart when you please; I and your viziers will, in your absence, take care of public affairs." The prince ordered his equipage to be got in readiness, and set off with only a few slaves, not choosing to be encumbered with a numerous retinue.

He pursued his journey without any disagreeable accident, and in due time arrived at Cairo, where he inquired after Mobarec. He learned that the person whom he sought was one of the richest men of the place; that he lived in the style of a great nobleman, and that his house was constantly open, particularly to strangers. Zeyn requested of some one to conduct him thither. He knocked at the door, which was opened by a slave, who desired to know his name and business. "I am a stranger," replied the prince, "and having heard much of the generosity of your master, Mobarec, am come to take up my abode with him." The slave requested Zeyn to wait a moment while he went to speak to his master, who immediately ordered the stranger to be admitted. The slave returned to the door to assure the prince of his being welcome.

Zeyn then proceeded to enter the house, and having crossed a large court, passed into a hall magnificently ornamented, where Mobarec, who was waiting for him, received him with much civility, and thanked him for the honour he did him in taking a lodging at his house. The prince, after having replied to his compliment, addressed him as follows: "In me you behold the son of our late king of Balsora; my name is Alasnam." "This king," said Mobarec, "I never knew your master; but, sir, I never knew that he had a son. How morning, a?" "I am twenty years of age," replied the prince. "How long the deceased

is it since you quitted my father's court?" "Nearly two-and-twenty years," said Mobarec; "but how will you assure me that you are his son?" "My father," returned Zeyn, "had a vault under his cabinet, in which I have found forty urns of porphyry, all filled with gold." "And what have you observed besides?" replied Mobarec. "There are," says the prince, "nine pedestals of massive gold, upon eight of which are diamond statues, and above the ninth a piece of white satin, upon which my father has written what it is necessary for me to do in order to obtain another statue more valuable than all the rest. You undoubtedly know where this statue is, since it is expressed upon the satin that you are to conduct me to it."

He had not finished these words, when Mobarec threw himself at his knees, and kissing one of his hands a great many times, "I return thanks to God," he exclaimed, "who has conducted you hither. I am now satisfied that you are the king of Balsora's son. If you wish to visit the place where the marvellous statue is to be found, I will lead you to it; but it is previously necessary that you should remain here some short time to recover your fatigue. I am this day giving an entertainment to the principal people of Cairo. We were at table when they came to inform me of your arrival. Will you condescend, sir, to come and join our party?" "By all means," replied Zeyn; "I shall be delighted to partake of your feast." Mobarec immediately conducted him under a lofty dome, where the company was assembled; made him take his seat at the table, and began to serve him on his knees, at which the grandees of Cairo expressed much surprise, saying to each other in a low tone of voice: "Who can this stranger be whom Mobarec waits upon with so much respect?"

After they had finished eating, Mobarec thus addressed the company: "Be not astonished, gentlemen, at the sort of respect you have seen me pay to this young stranger. Know that he is the son of the king of Balsora, my former master. His father purchased me with money from his own treasure, and died without having granted me my liberty. I am therefore still a slave! consequently myself and all my property does of right belong to this young prince, his sole heir." Zeyn here interrupted him: "O Mobarec," said he, "I declare before all these gentlemen, that you are free from this moment, and that I renounce every claim I may have on yourself or anything belonging to you; and only wish to know what I can further do to serve you." Mobarec at these words kissed the earth, and expressed in appropriate terms the infinite obligation he was under to the prince. Wine was afterwards introduced, of which they continued to drink during the remainder of the day, and in the evening presents were distributed to the guests before they retired.

The next day Zeyn said to Mobarec, "I have had sufficient repose; and since my visit to Cairo has not been taken with any view to pleasure, but merely with the intention of procuring the ninth statue, it is, I think, time that we should set off in search of it." "Sir," replied Mobarec, "I am ready to promote your wish; but at present you know not all the dangers you must be exposed to in order to make this precious acquisition." "Be the danger what it may," replied the prince, "I am resolved to undertake it, and will perish rather than not succeed. Every event whatever is under the direction of an all-ruling Providence. Do, therefore, but accompany me, and let your fortitude equal mine."

Mobarec seeing him determined to depart, summoned his domestics, and ordered them to provide equipages. The prince and he afterwards performed the ceremony of ablution and the religious rite called farz, after which they set out on their journey. They remarked upon the road a number of rare and surprising objects; and continuing their route during many days, at length arrived at a very delicious retreat, where they alighted from their horses.

Mobarec then said to the domestics who attended them, "Remain in this place and guard our equipages till we return." Then addressing himself to Zeyn, "Come, sir," said he, "let you and I advance by ourselves; we are now near the dreadful place where the ninth statue is guarded. You will have occasion for all your courage."

They soon arrived upon the margin of a lake. Mobarec seated himself upon the bank, and thus addressed the prince: "It is necessary that we should pass this water." "How is that possible," replied Zeyn, "as we have no boat?" "You will see one appear in a moment," returned Mobarec; "an enchanted bark belonging to the king of the Genii will come to receive you; but by no means forget what I now tell you. You must preserve a most profound silence, and on no account utter a syllable to the boatman. However singular his figure may seem, whatever you may see to excite your astonishment, speak not a word; for I tell you beforehand, that if you once open your lips after we are embarked, the vessel will founder in an instant." "I will take especial care to be silent," said the prince; "you have only to inform me what I have to do, and I will follow your instructions very exactly."

While he was saying this, he perceived, on a sudden, traversing the lake, a bark of red sankal-wood, having a mast of fine amber, with a streamer of blue satin. There was only one person to guide it, whose head resembled that of an elephant, and whose body was of the form of a tiger. When the vessel had nearly approached the prince and Mobarec, the boatman took them one after another by his trunk, and conveyed them into it. He then passed to the other side of the lake in an instant, and, taking them up as before, set them down on the opposite shore, after which he and his bark disappeared.

"It is now permitted us to speak," said Mobarec. "The island on which we now are, belongs to the king of the Genii, with which nothing in the rest of the world deserves to be compared. Regard it on all sides, and tell me, prince, if it is not a most charming retreat. It is without doubt a just image of that delightful abode which is prepared by the God above for the faithful observers of our law. See how the fields are scattered around with flowers, and with every sort of odoriferous herb. Admire these beautiful trees, bending to the earth with their immense burden of delicious fruits. Listen to the exquisite harmony which fills the air on every side, produced by innumerable birds of a species unknown in any other country." Zeyn, wholly insensible to fatigue, could not cease even for a moment from surveying the beauties that surrounded him, nor from observing as he advanced in the island, the variety of new charms which were constantly presenting themselves to his view.

They at length arrived in front of a palace, built of the finest emeralds, which was surrounded with a large moat, on the borders of which at due distances were planted trees, grown to so vast a height as to cover the whole palace with their shade. Opposite the gate, which was of massive gold, was a bridge made of the single shell of a fish, though it measured, at the least, twelve yards in length and six in breadth. At the head of the bridge, a troop of Genii appeared, of immeasurable height, who defended the entrance of the castle with immense clubs of Chinese steel.

"Let us advance no further," said Mobarec, "or these Genii will destroy us; and if we wish to prevent their coming hither, it will be necessary to perform a certain magic ceremony." At the same time he drew from a purse which he had under his robe, four bands of yellow taffeta, one of which he passed round his waist, and another along his back; the remaining two he gave to the prince, who made a similar use of them. After this, he spread upon the earth two large cloths or carpets, upon the borders of which he strewed a variety of precious stones, with a quantity of musk and amber. They then sat down each

of them on a carpet, when Mobarec addressed the prince in these terms : " I am going, sir, to bring hither the king of the Genii, who inhabits the palace now before you ; he will not, I hope, arrive in an angry mood, but I must confess to you, I am not without anxiety on the occasion. If our arrival in this island be disagreeable to him, he will appear under the form of a most dreadful monster ; but if he approves our purpose, he will assume the appearance of a well-looking man. As soon as he comes before you, it will be necessary for you to rise and salute him, but without quitting your carpet ; for should you leave it, you will infallibly perish. You must say to him, ' Sovereign lord of the Genii, my father, your late servant, hath been summoned away by the angel of death ; may it please your majesty to extend to me the same gracious protection you bestowed on my deceased parent.' If the king of the Genii," added Mobarec, " desires to know what is the favour you request of him, answer as follows : ' It is, sire, the ninth statue, which I most humbly entreat that you will have the goodness to give me.' "

Mobarec, after having in this way imparted to the prince the instruction he thought necessary, began his magic arts. Their eyes were immediately struck by a vivid flash of lightning, which was followed by a loud clap of thunder. The whole island was involved in thick darkness ; a furious storm arose, horrid cries were heard, the earth, trembling to its base, underwent a commotion like that which Asrafyel will produce at the dreadful day of final retribution.

Zeyn felt considerable alarm, and began to draw very unfavourable presages from the noise and confusion around him, when Mobarec, who better knew what to think of the matter, began to smile. " Take confidence, my prince," said he ; " everything goes well." At that moment the king of the Genii made his appearance under the form of a handsome man, retaining, however, in his air something a little terrific.

Prince Zeyn, as soon as he perceived him, delivered the compliment which Mobarec had dictated. The king of the Genii received him with a smile, and replied, " O my son, I loved your father, and as often as he came to pay me his respects, I presented him with a statue to take back with him. My affection for you is not less. Some days before your father's death, I obliged him to write upon the piece of white satin the inscription you there read ; I promised him to take you under my protection, and to give you the ninth statue, which surpasses in beauty all those in your possession. I have already begun to keep my word. It was I whom you saw in a dream, under the form of an old man. It was I who discovered to you the secret apartments where the urns and statues are. In everything that has happened to you I have taken a part, or rather have been the occasion of the whole. I know the purpose for which you are here ; you shall obtain your wish. If I had not even promised your father, I would most willingly grant it on your own account ; but it is first necessary that you should swear by everything which makes an oath sacred, that you will return to this island, and bring back with you a girl in the fifteenth year of her age, who shall never have known the enjoyments of love, or indulged a wish to know them. It is further necessary, that she should possess the most perfect beauty, and that you should be so completely master of yourself, that, in conducting her hither, you should form no desire inconsistent with the strictest virtue."

Zeyn took the rash oath which the king of the Genii required. " But, sir," said he afterwards, " suppose I should be fortunate enough to meet with the extraordinary person you have described, how shall I be able to know when I have found her ? " " I confess," replied the king of the Genii, smiling, " that in these cases the countenance may deceive ; this knowledge is not to be attained by the sons of Adam ; nor have I any intention of relying altogether on your

sagacity in so delicate an affair. I will give you a mirror, which will be much safer to trust to than to your conjectures. As soon as you see a perfectly beautiful girl at the age required, you will have only to look in your mirror, where you will behold her image. If the glass remains perfectly pure and unsullied, you may be assured that the damsel is virtuous; but if, on the contrary, it receives the least tarnish, it will be a certain proof that she has not been always upon her guard, or that there have been moments when she would have been well pleased not to be so. Do not then forget the oath you have taken; otherwise I shall deprive you of life, notwithstanding the regard I feel for you." Prince Zeyn Alasnam protested again that he would keep his word most exactly.

The king of the Genii then put a mirror into his hands, saying at the same time, "My son, you may return whenever you please, and with the aid of this mirror you may accomplish your purpose." Zeyn and Mobarec took leave of the king of the Genii, and proceeded towards the lake. The boatman with the elephant's head came to them with his bark, and put them over in the same manner as he had brought them. They rejoined the persons of their suite, with whom they returned to Cairo.

Prince Alasnam remained some days with Mobarec to recover from his fatigue. At length he said to him, "Let us depart for Bagdad, in order to find out a damsel for the king of the Genii." "What!" replied Mobarec, "are we not in Grand Cairo? Do you suppose we cannot in this place find plenty of handsome females?" "You are in the right," replied the prince; "but how shall we proceed to discover the places where they are?" "Give yourself no concern on that account, sir," replied Mobarec; "I know a very expert old woman, whom I will employ on the occasion. I have no doubt she will acquit herself very skilfully."

The old woman had, in truth, all the address required; she soon found means to give the prince a sight of a great number of very beautiful girls, of the age of fifteen; but when, after having observed them, he came to consult his mirror, the glass, the fatal touchstone of their virtue, was constantly clouded. All the females of the court and of the city, who were in their fifteenth year, underwent, in succession, the severe scrutiny; and in no instance did the glass preserve itself pure and unsullied.

When they found that at Cairo they could meet with no damsels of sufficient purity, they repaired to Bagdad. They here rented a magnificent palace, in one of the best parts of the city, and began to live with much hospitality. Their table was free to every one; and when the numerous guests in the palace were satisfied, what remained was conveyed to the dervises, who thence derived a very comfortable subsistence.

In the part of the city where they lived, was an iman, named Boubekir Muezin, a vain, proud, and envious man. He hated the rich, because he himself was poor, suffering his own wretchedness to exasperate him against the prosperity of his neighbour. As he frequently heard of Zeyn Alasnam, and of the abundance which reigned in his house, he required to know nothing more in order to conceive an extreme aversion to this prince. He even carried matters so far, that one day in the mosque, after evening prayers, he said to the people, "I have heard, my brethren, that a stranger, who has lately taken up his abode in our quarter of the town, expends daily very large sums. I can find no one that knows anything of him. He is probably some villain, who, having been a thief in his own country, is come to this large and populous city to enjoy his ill-gotten riches. Be upon your guard, my friends, for should the caliph learn that a person of this character is living amongst us, we have great reason to fear that he will punish us severely for not having informed him of it. With respect to myself, I shall stand acquitted, whatever may happen; it never

shall be imputed to any omission in me." The people, who usually allow themselves to be very easily persuaded, cried out with one voice to Boubekir, "It is your own affair; do you, therefore, give information to the council." The iman after this returned home, perfectly satisfied; and employed himself in composing a memorial, with the intention of presenting it to the caliph the next day.

But Mobarec, who had attended prayers, and with the rest had heard the iman's harangue, having put five hundred sequins of gold in a handkerchief, and prepared a parcel of several pieces of silk, made the best of his way to Boubekir's house. The iman, in a very rough tone of voice, desired to know what he wanted. "I am your neighbour and your servant," replied Mobarec, with an air of great mildness, putting, at the same time, into his hands the gold and the pieces of silk; "I come in behalf of Prince Zeyn, who lives in this part of the town. He has heard much of your merit, and has commanded me to come and tell you how much he wishes for the pleasure of your acquaintance; in the mean time, he begs you to accept this small present." Boubekir, transported with joy, replied to Mobarec: "Have the goodness, sir, to make my most humble excuses to the prince: assure him, that I am much concerned and ashamed at my negligence in not having yet waited upon him: that I will take an early opportunity to repair my fault, and that to-morrow he may expect me to pay my respects."

On the following day, after morning prayers, Boubekir thus addressed the people: "Be assured, my brethren, there is no one living who is without enemies: envy attacks all, but chiefly those who have large possessions. The stranger of whom I spoke to you yesterday, is not that villanous character which some ill-intentioned persons wished me to believe, but a young prince, possessed of a thousand virtues. Let us not then by any injurious report give the caliph a false impression of so worthy a man."

Boubekir having by this discourse effaced from the people's mind the opinion he had given of Zeyn the preceding day, returned back to his house. He then clothed himself in his dress of ceremony, and set off to wait upon this young prince, who received him very graciously. After many compliments on both sides, Boubekir said to the prince, "Do you propose, sir, to remain long at Bagdad?" "I shall continue here," replied Zeyn, "till I have found a female who is in her fifteenth year, and possessed of perfect beauty; and who, at the same time, shall be of such unsullied chastity, that she must not only have never known the delights of love, but have never wished to know them." "You are in search of a great rarity," replied the iman, "and I should extremely fear that your labour would be useless if I did not myself know a young lady of the character you describe. Her father, who was formerly vizier, has long since quitted the court; he has for many years been living in a very retired situation, where he has wholly devoted himself to the education of his daughter. I will, if you approve, wait upon him on your behalf; he will, I have no doubt, be delighted to have a son-in-law of your birth and elevated rank." "Not so fast," replied the prince; "I shall certainly not marry this young lady till I am beforehand assured that she is the sort of person I am in search of. With respect to her beauty, I can readily rely upon what you say; but in regard to her virtue, what proofs can you give me on this subject?" "Proofs!" said Boubekir, "what proofs would you wish to have?" "It is necessary," said Zeyn, "that I should see her face; I want nothing more to satisfy me." "You are then exceedingly expert in the science of physiognomy," replied the iman, smiling. "However, come with me to her father's, and I will beg his permission that you may see her for a single moment in his presence."

Muezin conducted the prince to the vizier's house, who was no sooner

informed of the birth and intentions of Zeyn than he gave orders that his daughter should appear, whom he commanded to remove her veil. Never had the young king of Balsora beheld so perfect and captivating a beauty. He surveyed her for some time in fixed astonishment. When at length he became sufficiently master of himself to make the important trial whether she was as virtuous as fair, he drew forth his mirror, the polished surface of which remained pure and unsullied.

Having at last discovered a damsel such as he sought, he begged of the vizier to grant her to his wishes. A cadi was immediately sent for; a marriage contract was prepared, and the previous ceremony of prayer performed, after which Zeyn attended the vizier to his house, where he entertained him very magnificently, and made him large presents. He sent afterwards a large quantity of jewels to the lady by Mobarec, to whom he gave it in charge to conduct her to his palace, where the nuptials were celebrated with all the pomp suitable to the high rank of Zeyn. When all the company had retired, Mobarec said to his master, "Let us depart, sir; we have no further business at Bagdad; it is necessary that we now return to Cairo: remember the promise you made to the king of the Genii." "Let us be off this instant," replied the prince. "I am determined most faithfully to fulfil my engagement; I will, however, confess to you, my dear Mobarec, that in obeying the king of the Genii, I do no small violence to my inclination. The person whom I have just married is very amiable; and I feel strongly inclined to convey her immediately to Balsora, and place her on my throne."

"Ah! sir," replied Mobarec, "resist with all possible fortitude so dangerous a wish; learn to subdue your passions; and whatever it may cost you, how great soever the conflict you sustain, keep your promise to the king of the Genii." "Well then, Mobarec," said the prince, "be careful to conceal from me this charming girl; let not my eyes ever behold her more; I fear, indeed, that I have already seen but too much of her."

Mobarec ordered preparations to be made for their departure. They returned to Cairo, and from thence took the route to the island of the king of the Genii. When they were arrived there, the lady, who had travelled all the way in a litter, and had never seen the prince from the day of their marriage, inquired of Mobarec in what place they then were. "Shall we not," said she, "soon arrive at the dominions of the prince, my husband?" "Madam," replied Mobarec, "it is time to undeceive you. Prince Zeyn has had no other view in marrying you than to draw you from the bosom of your father. It is not to make you sovereign of Balsora that he has pledged his faith to you; his intention is to deliver you to the king of the Genii, who has required from him a damsel of your character." At these words, the lady began to weep bitterly, which very much affected both the prince and Mobarec. "Have pity on me, I beseech you," she exclaimed. "I am here a helpless stranger; you will have to answer before God for the treachery with which you have conducted yourself towards me."

All her tears and complaints were ineffectual; they presented her to the king of the Genii, who, after having regarded her with attention, said to Zeyn: "I am fully satisfied, prince, with your conduct. The damsel you have brought me is equally virtuous and beautiful; and your meritorious resolution in keeping your word faithfully is highly pleasing to me. Return to your dominions; as soon as you revisit the subterraneous apartment, where are the eight statues, you will there find the ninth I before promised you; I shall take care to have it transported by the aid of my Genii." Zeyn returned his grateful thanks to the king: he then with Mobarec again set out on the road to Cairo, at which place he made a very short stay, his impatience to possess the



PRINCE ZEYN ALASNAM AND THE KING OF THE GENIL.

ninth statue urging him on as fast as possible. In the mean time, he did not cease to think frequently of the damsel he had espoused ; and severely condemning the deceit he had used, regarded himself as the sole cause of her misfortune. "Alas !" said he to himself, "I have stolen her from an affectionate father to sacrifice her to a Genius. Charming, incomparable beauty ! how much better a fate did you deserve !"

Full of these reflections, Prince Zeyn pursued his journey till he arrived at Balsora, where his subjects, delighted at his return, made very great rejoicings. He first waited upon the queen his mother, to give her an account of his journey, who learned with the greatest satisfaction that he was so near obtaining the ninth statue. "Come, my son," said she, "let us go and view it instantly ; for it is, without doubt, in the subterraneous apartment, where the king of the Genii has instructed you to expect it." The young king and his mother, burning with impatience to see this marvellous statue, descended into the vault, and entered the statue-room together. But how great was their surprise when, instead of a diamond statue, they perceived on the ninth pedestal a young damsel of perfect beauty, whom the prince immediately recollected to be the person he had conducted to the island of the Genii. "You are much surprised, prince," said the young lady, "to see me here ; you were expecting to find something much more precious ; and, I doubt not, at this very moment heartily repent of having taken so much trouble. You proposed to yourself some worthier recompense." "No, madam," replied Zeyn, "Heaven is my witness how much I wished to preserve you to myself, and of the frequent desire I had to break my promise to the king of the Genii. Whatever may be the value of a diamond statue, can it possibly be equal to the pleasure of possessing you ? Be assured, I love you better than all the diamonds and all the riches in the world."

Just as he was concluding this speech, a clap of thunder was heard which shook the whole subterraneous building. The mother of Zeyn was much alarmed ; but the king of the Genii, who instantly appeared, dissipated her terrors. "Madam," said he, "I protect and love your son. I have been desirous to know whether, at his age, he would be able to subdue his passions. I am well aware that the charms of this young person have touched his heart, and that he did not exactly keep the promise he made, not to wish even the possession of her ; but I am at the same time too well acquainted with the frailty of human nature to be much offended at it ; and am delighted with the virtue and moderation he has shown. Behold here the ninth statue, bestowed upon him as the reward of his merit ; it is infinitely more rare and precious than all the others. Live, Zeyn," added he, addressing himself to the prince, "live happy with this young lady : she is your wife ; and if you wish that she should preserve for you a pure and constant faith, love her always, and love only her. Take care to give her no rival, and I will be answerable for her fidelity." The king of the Genii disappeared at these words, and Zeyn, in raptures of delight, concluded his marriage on the same day, and had her proclaimed Queen of Balsora, where this virtuous pair, always faithful and always affectionate, lived together a great number of years in most perfect happiness.

The sultana of the Indies had no sooner finished the story of Prince Zeyn Alasnam, than she begged permission to begin another ; which Schiarif having granted to her for the next night, as daylight was now beginning to appear, the princess began her narrative on the following morning, in these terms :

THE HISTORY OF CODADAD AND HIS BROTHERS, AND OF THE PRINCESS OF DERYABAR.

It is related by the historians of the kingdom of Diarbekir, that in the city of Harran there formerly reigned a most magnificent and powerful monarch, whose regard for his subjects was not less than their affection for him. He was possessed of every virtue, and wanted nothing to make him perfectly happy but the blessing of an heir. Although he had in his seraglio the most beautiful women in the world, he still had no children. He was incessantly offering up his prayers to Heaven; when one night, while he was enjoying the sweets of sleep, a man of venerable appearance, or rather a prophet, stood before him, and said; "Your prayers are heard; you will obtain what you so earnestly desire; rise as soon as you are awake, and instantly begin praying, making two genuflections: after which, go into the gardens belonging to your palace, call the gardener, and desire him to bring you a pomegranate; eat some of the seeds, as many as may be agreeable to you, and your wishes will be fulfilled."

The king, as soon as he awoke, recollected his dream, and returned thanks to Heaven. He rose, addressed himself in prayer, and made the genuflections required; he then went into his gardens, took fifty pomegranate-seeds, which he counted one by one, and eat them. He had fifty wives, who occasionally shared his bed, all of whom became pregnant; but there was one named Pirouzè, whose pregnancy did not appear. He conceived in consequence an aversion to this lady, and was desirous to put her to death. "Her barrenness," said he, "is a sure proof that Heaven deems her unworthy to be the mother of a prince. It is my duty to rid the world of an object odious to the Deity." He formed this cruel resolution, but his vizier dissuaded him from it, by representing to him, that all women were not of the same temperament and constitution, and that it was not impossible but that Pirouzè might be pregnant, though her situation had not declared itself. "Well," replied the king, "let her live; but she must not remain in my court, for her presence is hateful to me." "Will your majesty be pleased," replied the vizier, "to send her to Prince Samer, your cousin?" The king approved the advice: he sent Pirouzè to Samer, with a letter, in which he desired his cousin to treat her with proper attention; and if she were pregnant, to give him information of it as soon as she should be brought to bed.

Pirouzè was no sooner arrived in that country than it was discovered that she was with child; in due time she became the mother of a prince, beautiful as the day. The prince of Samaria wrote immediately to the king of Harran, to make him acquainted with the happy birth of this son, and to congratulate him on the event. This information gave his majesty very great pleasure; and in reply, he wrote to Prince Samer in these terms: "Dear cousin, all my other wives have every one of them been delivered of a prince, so at present we have here a vast number of children; I beg, therefore, that you will take charge of Pirouzè's infant, and give him the name of Codadad (God's gift): I will send to you when I wish to have him."

The prince of Samaria spared nothing in the education of his nephew. He was taught to ride, to shoot with the bow, and all other things suitable to the son of a king, with so much success, that at the age of eighteen years he was esteemed a perfect prodigy. This young prince, perceiving in himself a courage worthy of his birth, said one day to his mother, "I begin, madam, to be tired of Samaria. I perceive in myself an ardent love of glory; permit me, then, to go in search of it amidst the dangers of war. The king of Harran, my father, is not without enemies: some neighbouring princes are at this time pre-

paring to trouble his peace. Why does he not require my aid? Why am I left here to pass so long a time in fruitless infancy? I ought to be present at his court. While all my brothers have the privilege of sharing the dangers of war by his side, must I alone pass my life in torpid indolence?" "My dear son," replied Pirouzè, "I am not less impatient than yourself to see you in the way of obtaining fame and honour; I much wish that you had already distinguished yourself against the enemies of the king your father; but it is necessary to wait till he requires your assistance." "No, madam," replied Codadad, "I have waited already but too long. I burn with desire to see the king my father, and I feel strongly inclined to go and offer him my services, as a young person who is unknown to him. He will, without doubt, accept them; nor do I intend to discover myself till I shall have performed a thousand glorious exploits. I earnestly wish to merit his esteem before he shall know me to be his son." Pirouzè much approved this generous resolution; and lest Prince Samer should oppose it, Codadad, without imparting to him his intention, took the opportunity one day of leaving Samaria, under pretence of taking the pleasures of the chase.

He was mounted upon a white horse, having a golden bridle and shod with gold. The saddle and housings, which were of blue satin, were thickly embroidered with pearls. He wore at his side a sabre, the hilt of which was formed of a single diamond, and the scabbard was made of sandal-wood, ornamented with emeralds and rubies. His bow and quiver hung gracefully across his shoulders. Thus equipped in a manner which was greatly becoming to his natural good appearance, he arrived at the city of Harran. He soon found an opportunity of being presented to the king, who, charmed with his beauty and fine figure, or perhaps drawn by the secret ties of blood, gave him a very favourable reception, and demanded of him his name and rank. "Sire," replied Codadad, "I am the son of an emir of Cairo; my desire to travel has induced me to quit my country, and as I learned, in passing through your dominions, that you are at war with some of your neighbours, I directed my way to your court, in order that I might offer the assistance of my arm to your majesty." The king overwhelmed him with caresses, and immediately gave him a distinguished situation in his army.

This young prince was not slow in making his valour known. He acquired the esteem of the officers, excited the admiration of the soldiers, and, as he had no less understanding than courage, so effectually secured himself in the good graces of the king, that he soon became his favourite. A day never passed that the ministers and other courtiers did not attend to pay their respects to Codadad, seeking his friendship with much eagerness, while they wholly disregarded the other sons of the king.

These young princes could not behold this neglect without feeling themselves much offended; and imputing it entirely to the esteem in which the stranger was held, they all conceived the greatest aversion to him. At the same time the king, becoming every day more attached to him, was continually giving him marks of his affection. He wished him to be constantly about his person. He was charmed with his conversation, which he found replete with wit and knowledge; and to give indisputable proof of the high opinion he entertained of his wisdom and prudence, he intrusted him with the care of the other princes—although he was but of the same age as themselves—in such a way that Codadad became the governor of his brothers.

This, as may be supposed, only increased their hatred. "What!" said they, "is not the king contented with bestowing on this stranger the affection which he owes to us; but must he also make him our governor, so that we are to do nothing without his permission? This is more than we can or ought to

endure. We must rid ourselves of this encroacher on our rights." "We have only," said one of them, "to go all of us together in search of him, and to fall on him with our sabres." "No, no," said another, "we must not be ourselves the ministers of our revenge; his death would render us hateful to the king, who would perhaps, in consequence, declare us all unworthy to reign. Let us manage the business with more dexterity. I propose that we ask leave to hunt, and when we are at a considerable distance from the palace, let us take the road to some other city, where we will go and remain for some time. Our absence will alarm the king, who, not seeing us return, will lose all patience, and most likely condemn the stranger to death: he will at least be dismissed from court for having allowed us to quit the palace."

All the princes applauded this artifice. They went immediately in search of Codadad, and entreated him to give them permission to take the diversion of hunting, promising to return the same day. The son of Pirouzè fell into the snare, and granted the request which his brothers made. They departed, but returned not. They had already been absent three days, when the king said to Codadad: "Where are the princes? It is a long time since I saw them." "Sire," he replied, making the most profound reverence, "they have been out on a hunting-party for the last three days; they promised me that they would return much sooner." The king became anxious about his sons, and his uneasiness increased on the following day, when he found that the princes did not make their appearance. He was no longer able to restrain his anger: "Impudent stranger," said he to Codadad, "how dare you permit my sons to go away without accompanying them? Is it in this manner that you acquit yourself of the important charge committed to you? Go and search for them instantly, and bring them to me, or be assured that your destruction is inevitable."

At these words of the king, the unhappy son of Pirouzè was chilled with fear. He immediately provided himself with his accustomed arms, mounted his horse, and left the city to go in search of his brothers, traversing the country like a shepherd who has lost his flock. He inquired in every village if they had been seen to pass through it, but obtaining no information whatever, he at length abandoned himself to despair. "Ah! my brothers," he exclaimed, "where are you gone? Alas! perhaps you have fallen into the hands of enemies, and are at this moment enduring every hardship that their malice can dictate. Would to God I had never come to the court of Harra! I alone am to blame in occasioning so much grief to the king. How can I repair the evil of which I have been guilty?" In these and similar expressions he poured forth his lamentations at the disastrous event which had taken place, and of which he considered himself the sole author.

After some days employed in a fruitless search, he arrived in a plain of vast extent, in the middle of which was a palace built of black marble. On approaching near it, he saw at the window a lady of excessive beauty. Her charms, however highly attractive, owed nothing to the aid of ornament; her hair was dishevelled, her garments torn, and her countenance expressed the utmost affliction. As soon as she perceived Codadad, and he was near enough to hear what she said, she addressed him in these words: "O young man, fly from this fatal place, or you will soon find yourself in the power of the monster who inhabits it. A negro, who makes his repast on human blood, has here his abode; he seizes every one whose hard fortune occasions them to pass through this plain, and shuts them up in dark dungeons, whence they are never released but to be devoured."

"Madam," replied Codadad, "inform me who you are, and give yourself no concern with respect to me." "I am a person of rank, and come from Cairo,"

replied the lady. "I was passing near this castle in my way to Bagdad, when I met the negro, who killed all my servants, and brought me hither. I wish I had nothing worse to fear than death; but to increase my misery, this wretch is desirous that I should pretend an affection for his person, and if I do not to-morrow yield myself a willing sacrifice to his brutality, I am to expect the last and most cruel effect of his passion. Once more," added she, "let me entreat you to save yourself; the negro will soon return; he is gone in pursuit of some travellers whom he observed at a distance on the plain. You have no time to lose, and I know not whether even the most rapid flight will now enable you to escape."

She had not finished these words when the negro appeared—a monster of most gigantic size and terrific appearance. He was mounted on a very powerful Tartarian horse, and carried at his side a scimitar so large and heavy, that none but himself could wield it. The prince, having observed him, was astonished at his immense stature. He offered up his prayers to Heaven to entreat its favour and protection; he then drew his sabre, and waited in a firm posture of defence till the negro should attack him, who, scorning so feeble a foe, summoned him to surrender without conflict; but Codadad soon made him sensible, by his undaunted countenance, that he intended to defend his life; for he approached, and gave him a violent blow on the knee. The negro, perceiving himself wounded, uttered a most dreadful cry, which resounded through the whole plain. He became furious—he even foamed with rage; and rising upon his stirrups, prepared, in his turn, to strike Codadad with his tremendous scimitar. The blow was aimed with so much force, that the young prince would have been inevitably killed if he had not had the address to evade it by the most skilful management of his horse. The scimitar made a tremendous hissing in the air. But before he had time to aim a second blow, Codadad levelled one at him with so much force, that he cut off his right arm. The dreadful scimitar fell impotent with the hand that held it; and the negro, yielding to the violence of the blow, lost his stirrups and his seat, while the earth resounded with the noise occasioned by his fall. The prince alighted immediately from his horse, threw himself upon his enemy, and cut off his head. At this moment the lady, who had been all the time a witness of the combat, and who was still offering her ardent vows to Heaven for the young hero, whose person had already struck her with admiration, sent forth a shout of joy; she then addressed herself to Codadad: "Prince, for the severe victory you have just gained, as well as your noble air, fully persuade me that you can be of no common condition, finish your work; the negro has the keys of the castle, take them and come and release me from prison." The prince followed the lady's directions, and searched the dress of the miserable wretch as he lay extended in the dust, and found a variety of keys in his pockets.

He opened the first gate of the castle, and entered into a large court, where he found the lady, who was approaching to meet him. She was anxious to throw herself at his feet to express her gratitude, but he would not permit her. She commended his valour, and exalted him above all the heroes of the world. To these compliments he replied in proper terms, and as she appeared to him even more lovely now he saw her near than when he beheld her at a distance, it is not easy to say who experienced the greater delight: she, at being released from so perilous a situation, or he, at having rendered so important a service to so charming a woman.

Their conversation was now interrupted by cries and groans. "What do I hear?" exclaimed Codadad; "whence come these lamentable sounds which assail my ears?" "Sir," said the lady, pointing towards a low door which was in the court, "they arise from yonder place, where are confined a number of

unhappy persons, whose unpropitious stars threw into the negro's hands. They are all in chains, and every day this monster drew forth one of them for his horrid repast."

"I am rejoiced to find," said the prince, "that my victory saves the lives of so many unfortunate persons. Come, madam, come and partake with me the pleasure of restoring them their liberty; you can judge by your own feelings of the happiness we are going to confer." At these words, they advanced towards the door of the dungeon: in proportion as they approached it, they heard more distinctly the cries of the prisoners. Codadad felt the most anxious solicitude for these unhappy sufferers, and impatient to put an end to their misery, he applied without delay one of the keys to the lock; he did not at first find the right one, he then tried another. The noise alarmed these wretched people: they were fully persuaded that it was the negro, who, according to custom, was bringing them their daily food, and coming to seize on one of their companions. They redoubled their groans and lamentations; and it seemed as if the dismal sounds proceeded from the centre of the earth.

In the mean time the prince opened the door, and discovered a very steep staircase, by means of which he descended into a vast and profound cave, rendered more horrible by the feeble light which it received from a single small aperture; within, were a hundred more persons confined to stakes, having their hands bound. "Unfortunate travellers," said he; "miserable victims, who had nothing to expect but the moment of a cruel death, return your thanks to Heaven which has this day delivered you by the assistance of my arm. I have killed the horrible negro of whom you were destined to be the prey; and am now come to break your chains." The prisoners had no sooner heard these words than they sent forth all together a cry of surprise and joy. Codadad and the lady began to unbind them, and those who were released from their chains assisted in giving freedom to the rest, so that in a very short time the whole number were at liberty.

They then fell upon their knees and thanked Codadad for saving them from destruction: after this they quitted the cave. When they ascended into the court, how great was the astonishment of the prince to see amongst the prisoners his brothers, of whom he was in search, and whom he had despaired of ever beholding more. "Princes!" he exclaimed, on seeing them, "am I not deceived? May I then still hope to restore you to the arms of the king your father, who is now inconsolable for your absence? Are you all in safety? Has no one fallen a prey to the destructive monster? Alas! the death of only one amongst you would be sufficient to poison all the joy I feel at having saved the rest."

The forty-nine princes all presented themselves before Codadad, who embraced them one after another, and informed them of the great uneasiness which their absence had occasioned the king. They bestowed on their deliverer all the praises he so well merited, as did also the rest of the prisoners, who were yet unable to find terms sufficiently strong to express the gratitude they felt at their release. After this, Codadad, accompanied by all those whom he had rescued from the dungeon, visited the whole castle, in which they found goods of immense value, consisting of fine cloths, gold brocades, Persian carpets, Chinese satins, and an infinity of other merchandise, which the negro had taken from the caravans he had pillaged; and of which a great part belonged to the prisoners whom Codadad had just released, who each knew and claimed his own property. The prince ordered that they should every one take the bales that belonged to them; and he afterwards divided equally amongst them the rest of the merchandise. He then said to them, "But how will you remove these goods? We are here in a desert, where there seems not the least proba-

bility of our being able to procure horses." "Sir," replied one of the prisoners, "the negro took our camels at the same time that he robbed us of our other property; perhaps they are still in the stables belonging to this castle." "It is not impossible," returned Codadad; "let us go and examine." They went to the stables, where they found not only the camels of the merchants, but even the horses belonging to the sons of the king of Harrañ. This gave them all very great delight. There were in the stables a number of black slaves, who seeing the prisoners freed, and concluding from thence that the negro was killed, took the alarm, and had recourse immediately to flight by a variety of circuitous paths with which they were acquainted. No one had the least desire to follow them. The merchants, delighted that they had recovered their camels and goods with their liberty, prepared to depart; but before they went, they again made their most grateful acknowledgments to their deliverer.

When they were gone, Codadad addressed himself to the lady: "May I inquire, madam," said he, "whither you wish to go? To what country were you directing your steps when you were surprised by the negro? It is my wish and intention to conduct you to the place you may have fixed on for your retreat; and I have no doubt that these princes have formed the same resolution." The sons of the king of Harrañ protested to the lady, that they would not leave her till they had restored her to her friends.

"Princes," said she to them, "I belong to a country far distant from hence; and, besides that it would be an abuse of your generosity to take you so much out of your way, I confess to you that I am for ever separated from my home. I told you a little while since, that I was a lady of Cairo; but after the kindness you have shown me, and the great obligation I owe to you, sir," added she, directing her speech to Codadad, "I can have no reason to conceal from you the real truth. I am, then, the daughter of a king. A usurper, after taking away my father's life, seized upon his throne. Fearing to meet with the same untimely end, I had recourse to flight, as the only means to preserve myself." In consequence of this avowal, Codadad and his brothers entreated the princess to relate her history; assuring her that they took all possible interest in her misfortunes: and that there was nothing they were not ready to do in order to promote her happiness. After having thanked them for their new offers of service, and believing that she could not, with any civility, refuse to gratify their curiosity, she began the following recital of her adventures.

"There is in a certain island a large city, called Deryabar. It was for a long time governed by a great, powerful, and virtuous monarch, who, had he been blessed with children, would have wanted nothing to render him completely happy. He was perpetually offering prayers to Heaven for a son; but the queen his wife, after long and earnest expectation, gave to the world only a daughter.

"I am this unhappy princess. My father felt disappointment rather than pleasure at my birth; but he submitted to the will of God. He had me educated with all imaginable care, being resolved, since he had no son, that I should be instructed in the art of government, and succeed to the throne at his decease.

"While he was one day taking the diversion of hunting, he perceived a wild ass, which he immediately pursued, separating himself from the rest of his party. His ardour carried him so far, that, without thinking how far he strayed, he continued the pursuit till night. He then alighted from his horse, and seated himself at the entrance of the wood, into which he had observed the ass to enter. Scarcely was the day closed, when he perceived a light amongst the trees, which led him to suppose that he was not far distant from

some village; and he rejoiced at the thoughts of being able to pass the night there, and also of finding some one to send to the people of his suite, in order to inform them where he was. He arose and proceeded towards the light, which served as a guide to him.

"He very soon discovered that he had been deceived, and that this light proceeded from a fire in a hut not far distant. He approached towards it, when he was much astonished to behold a tall black man, or rather a horrible giant, who was sitting upon a sofa. The monster had before him a large pitcher of wine, and was roasting upon some coals, an ox, which he had just flayed. He was constantly employing himself either in drinking out of the pitcher, or in cutting the ox into pieces, which he greedily devoured. But what most engaged the attention of the king my father, was a beautiful woman, whom he saw in the hut. She appeared to be absorbed in profound melancholy; her hands were tied; at her feet was a little child between two or three years of age, who, as if he were already sensible to the misfortunes of his mother, wept without intermission, making the air resound with his cries.

"My father was so affected at what he saw, that he felt at first a strong inclination to enter the hut and attack the giant; but reflecting that this combat would be too unequal, he restrained himself, and resolved to do by surprise what he despaired of being able to effect by force. In the mean time the giant, after having emptied the pitcher and eaten more than half the ox, turned himself towards the lady, and said, 'Charming princess, why will you, by your obstinacy, compel me to treat you with so much rigour? It depends entirely on yourself to be happy; you have only to take the resolution to love and be faithful to me, to assure yourself of the most kind and gentle treatment.' 'Thou hateful satyr,' replied the lady, 'never hope that time will diminish the horror I experience in beholding thee; thou wilt ever be a monster in my eyes.' These words were followed by so many injurious expressions, that the giant became irritated. 'This is too much,' he exclaimed in a furious tone; 'love thus scorned turns to rage; your hate has at length excited mine; it now so far gets the better of my inclination, that I have never so ardently wished the possession of your charms, as I now wish your destruction.' Having concluded these words, he seized the unhappy woman by her hair, and holding her with one hand in the air, while he drew his scimitar with the other, was preparing to cut off her head, when the king, my father, discharged an arrow, which pierced his breast; the giant staggered, and in an instant fell down lifeless.

"My father entered the hut; he untied the lady's hands, and then requested to know who she was, and by what accident she had been brought to such a place. 'Sir,' she replied, 'there are living upon the sea-shore a certain number of Saracenic families, whose chief was a prince to whom I am married. This giant, whom you have just killed, was one of his principal officers; this wretch conceived a violent passion for me, which he took great pains to conceal till he should find a favourable opportunity of executing a scheme he had formed of carrying me away by force. It should seem that fortune more frequently favours the enterprises of the wicked than the resolutions of the good. The giant surprised me one day with my child in a retired place, when he carried us both off; and to render useless all the inquiries which he naturally supposed my husband would make on the occasion, he travelled to a great distance from the country inhabited by the Saracens, and brought us to this wood, where he has kept me for some days.

"'But however deplorable my destiny may be, I do not fail to derive much secret consolation when I reflect, that this giant, brutal and impassioned as he was, never had recourse to violence to obtain that which I always refused to his prayers. It is true he was threatening me perpetually that he would proceed

to the most shocking extremities if he could not otherwise get the better of my resistance ; and I confess to you, that frequently, when I have by the freedom of my language excited his anger, I have been much less apprehensive for my life than for my honour.

" 'This, sir,' continued the wife of the prince of the Saracens, 'is my history ; and you will, I doubt not, think me so far worthy of your pity, as not to repent the generous assistance you have given me.' 'Indeed, madam,' replied my father, 'your misfortunes interest me much ; I feel myself very strongly affected by them, nor shall it be my fault, if your future destiny be not very different from what you have lately experienced. To-morrow, as soon as the morning rays shall have dispersed the shades of night, we will leave this wood, and seek the road to the great city of Deryabar, of which I am sovereign ; and, if it be agreeable to you, you shall remain in my palace till the prince your husband comes to demand you.'

"The lady accepted the proposal ; and the next day followed the king my father. Immediately on quitting the wood, he observed the officers of his suite, who had passed the night in search of him, and were in great anxiety on his account. Their delight at seeing him again was not greater than their astonishment when they beheld with him a lady of such exquisite beauty. He related to them in what manner he had met with her, and the danger he had run in approaching the hut, where he would, without doubt, have lost his life if the giant had seen him. One of the officers took the lady behind him, and another took charge of the child.

"They arrived in this manner at the palace of the king my father,* who immediately ordered an apartment for the fair Saracen, and had her son educated with the greatest attention. The lady was far from insensible to the king's goodness ; she felt towards him all the gratitude he could wish. She at first seemed rather uneasy and impatient at hearing nothing from the prince her husband, but her disquietude gradually diminished. The constant respect that was paid her by my father charmed away her impatience ; so much so indeed, that she would at last, I believe, have considered herself more unfortunate in being restored to her relations, than in having been ever separated from them.

"In the mean time the son of this lady attained manhood ; he was an extremely good figure, and, as he by no means wanted understanding, readily found the way of pleasing the king my father, who conceived for him a great regard. This was quickly perceived by the persons of the court, who imagined in consequence that this young man would be my husband. Possessed of this opinion, and looking upon him as heir to the crown, they attached themselves to him with much assiduity, and every one of them very strenuously endeavoured to gain his confidence. The young man had sufficient penetration to discover the motive of their attachment ; the idea was so grateful to him, that, forgetting the difference of our situations, he indulged himself in the hope that my father had conceived so great an affection for him as to prefer his alliance to that of all the princes of the world. He went even further ; the king being, in his opinion, too tardy in offering him my hand, he presumed to demand it.

"However great might be the punishment due to such audacity, my father contented himself with telling him that he had other views for me, without testifying any particular marks of displeasure. This haughty youth was extremely irritated at the refusal, and felt himself as much offended at the slight put upon his addresses as if he had demanded a common person, or as if his birth had equalled mine. His resentment did not rest here : he resolved to avenge himself on the king ; and by an excess of ingratitude of which there are, I trust, few examples, he conspired against him, struck a poniard to his heart,

and got himself proclaimed king of Deryabar by a great number of discontented persons, by whose disaffection he well knew how to profit. His first care, after he had removed my father, was to come himself to my apartment at the head of a party of the conspirators. His design was either to take away my life, or compel me to marry him. But I had time to escape. While he was employed in murdering my father, the grand vizier, who had always been faithful to his master, came, and tearing me from the palace, conveyed me to a place of safety in the house of one of his friends, where he kept me concealed till a vessel, secretly prepared by his order, was ready to sail. I then quitted the island, accompanied only by a female attendant and this generous minister, who was more inclined to follow the daughter of his master and share her misfortunes than to obey a tyrant.

"It was the intention of the grand vizier to conduct me to the courts of some neighbouring monarchs, in order to implore their assistance, and excite them to revenge the death of my father; but Heaven did not approve a resolution which to us appeared so reasonable. After some days' sailing, there arose so violent a tempest, that, in spite of all the skill of the sailors, our vessel, carried away by the violence of the winds and waves, split upon a rock. I will not stop to give you a description of our shipwreck. I could ill paint the manner in which the grand vizier, and all those who accompanied me, were swallowed up in the dreadful abyss: the fright with which I was seized did not allow me to observe all the horror of our fate. I soon lost my senses, nor can I tell whether I was carried on shore by some pieces of the wreck, or that Heaven, in order to reserve me for further calamity, wrought a miracle to save me; I only know, that when I recovered my senses, I found myself on the shore.

"Misfortune often renders us unjust: instead of thanking God for the signal favour bestowed on me, I impiously lifted up my eyes to reproach Heaven for the protection it had granted. Far from lamenting the vizier and my attendant, I envied their fate; and my reason giving way by degrees to the frightful images which had taken possession of my mind, I formed the desperate resolution of throwing myself into the sea. At the instant I was going to rush forward, I heard behind me a great noise of men and horses. I immediately turned my head to see what it was, when I beheld a number of armed horsemen, among whom was one mounted upon an Arabian horse. He had on a robe embroidered with silver, confined by a girdle of precious stones, and a crown of gold upon his head. If his dress had not sufficiently declared that he was the chief of the party, I should have discovered it from the air of grandeur which was diffused over his whole person. He was a young man extremely well made, and beautiful as the morning. Surprised to see a lady by herself in so retired a place, he sent forward some of his officers to inquire who I was. I could make no reply but by tears. As the shore was covered with wreck from our vessel, they concluded that a ship had lately been cast away on the coast, and that I was one who had escaped. This conjecture, and the lively grief I expressed; excited the curiosity of the officers, who began to ask me a thousand questions, assuring me, that their king was a generous prince, and that I should find at his court everything to console me.

"The king himself, impatient to learn who I could be, was tired of waiting for the return of his officers: he approached himself, and observed me with great attention; and as I still continued to weep and moan, without being able to reply to those who interrogated me, he forbade them to weary me any longer with their questions, and addressing himself to me: 'Madam,' said he, 'I entreat you to moderate your affliction. If Heaven in its anger has made you feel its rigour, are you on that account to abandon yourself to despair? Sum-wamon, I entreat you, more fortitude; the pains as well as the pleasures of this his page.

life are inconstant ; your fate may soon change : I venture to assure you, myself, that if your distresses can be alleviated, they will be so in my dominions. I offer you the asylum of my palace ; you will be near the queen my mother, who will endeavour by every kind attention to mitigate your grief. Though ignorant at present who you are, I feel myself much interested in your behalf.

"I thanked the young king for his goodness, and accepted the obliging offers he made me ; and to prove to him that I was not beneath his regard, I discovered to him who I was. I painted to him the audacity of the young Saracen, and had only occasion to make a very simple narrative of my sufferings, to excite his compassion, and that of all his officers. The prince, after I had done speaking, resumed the conversation, and again assured me, that he took a great interest in my misfortunes. He afterwards conducted me to the palace, where he presented me to the queen his mother. It was necessary again to relate the history of my adventures, and to renew my tears. The queen showed herself extremely sensible to my affliction, and conceived for me the tenderest regard. With respect to the king her son, he became passionately in love with me, and soon offered me his hand and his crown. I had been hitherto so much engrossed by the various disasters I had suffered, that the prince, amiable as he was, had not made that impression on me which under different circumstances he probably would have done. Penetrated, however, with gratitude, I did not refuse to promote his happiness ; our marriage was solemnised with all the pomp imaginable.

"While every one was occupied in celebrating the nuptials of their sovereign, a neighbouring and hostile prince came one night with a considerable army, and made a descent upon the island. This formidable enemy was the king of Zanguebar ; he came upon us entirely by surprise, and cut in pieces all the subjects of the king my husband. He was on the point of taking both him and me—for he was already in the palace with part of his people—but we found means of saving ourselves, and of gaining the sea shore, where we threw ourselves into a fisherman's bark, which we had the good fortune to meet with. For two days we followed the course of the winds without knowing what would be our fate ; on the third we perceived a ship, which approached us in full sail. We were at first delighted at the sight, supposing that it was some merchant vessel coming to our relief ; but how great was our surprise and concern, when on its nearer approach, we saw on the deck ten or twelve armed corsairs. They immediately proceeded to board us ; five or six threw themselves into the bark, seized upon us both, bound the prince my husband, and made us go into their own vessel, when they immediately removed my veil. My youth and appearance struck them : they were all of them indeed so anxious to possess me, that instead of drawing lots for me, every one insisted on a preference, and resolved that I should become his prey. The dispute grew warm, when from words they soon proceeded to blows, fighting like madmen. In a moment the deck was covered with dead bodies ; nor did the conflict cease till the whole party was slain, with the exception of a single man, who finding himself master of my person, thus addressed me : 'You now belong to me : it is my intention to conduct you to Cairo ; I shall there present you to a friend of mine to whom I have promised a handsome slave. But,' added he, observing the king my husband, 'who is that man ? What connexion has he with you ? Are you allied by blood, or is it love that has brought you together ?' 'Sir,' I replied to him, 'he is my husband.' 'If that's the case,' replied the corsair, 'I must get rid of him out of pity. He must not have the affliction of seeing you in my friend's arms.' At these words he took the unhappy prince, who was bound, and threw him into the sea, notwithstanding all the efforts I could make to prevent him.

"This cruel action drew from me the most dreadful shrieks; and I should indisputably have plunged myself into the waves if the pirate had not prevented me. Perceiving that I had no other wish than to put an end to my existence, he bound me with cords to the mainmast, and then setting sail, proceeded with a favourable wind towards the shore, where we soon landed. I was, of course, released from my confinement, after which he conducted me towards a small town, where he purchased camels, tents, and slaves, and then took the route of Cairo, in the intention, as he frequently said, of fulfilling his promise to his friend.

"We had been some time on our way, when yesterday, in passing through this plain, we perceived the negro who inhabited this castle. When we first saw him at a distance, we supposed him to be a tower, and afterwards, when he approached us, we had great difficulty in believing him to be a man. He drew his enormous scimitar, and summoned the pirate to surrender himself prisoner, with all his slaves and the lady he was conducting. The corsair did not want courage, and being seconded by his slaves, who all promised to be faithful, he attacked the negro. The combat was of long continuance: but the pirate at length fell under the blows of his enemy, as did also the slaves, who were determined to die rather than abandon their master. The negro, after this, conveyed me to the castle, bearing at the same time the body of the pirate, which he eat for supper. Towards the end of this horrible repast, he said to me, observing that I did nothing but weep: 'Young lady, instead of thus afflicting yourself prepare to gratify my desires; let me recommend you to yield with a good grace to what you cannot avoid; I will allow you to reflect upon the affair till to-morrow, in the hope that I shall then see you consoled for your misfortunes, in the delight you must feel at being reserved for my bed!' When he had finished this speech, he himself conducted me to a chamber, and then retired to his own, having first secured all the doors of the castle; these he opened again this morning, taking care to fasten them after him, in order to pursue some travellers whom he observed at a distance, but who, it is probable, made their escape, since he was returning alone, and without plunder, when you attacked him."

The princess had no sooner concluded the history of her adventures, than Codadad assured her, that he sympathised most sincerely in her misfortunes: "But, madam," he added, "it will depend wholly on yourself whether your future life be not more tranquil. The sons of the king of Harran offer you an asylum in their father's court. Let me entreat you to accept it. You will find a kind protector in this prince; and will be respected by every one: and if you do not disclaim the vows of him who has had the good fortune to be your deliverer, allow me to offer you my hand; consent from this moment to be mine, and let the princes be witnesses of our engagement." The princess yielded to his entreaty, and the marriage was solemnised in the castle on the same day. Every sort of provision was found in readiness for the occasion, the kitchens being full of meats, and of various dishes, which the negro was accustomed to feed on after he had satisfied himself with human flesh. There was also a variety of fruits, all excellent of their kind; and to complete their good fortune, a great quantity of liquors and of exquisite wines.

They all sat down to table; when they had eaten and drank as much as they wished, they packed up the rest of the provisions, and left the castle, with the intention of returning to the king of Harran's court. They continued their journey many days, encamping in the most agreeable spots they could find. Being arrived at their last resting-place, within a day's journey of Harran, they drank up the remainder of their wine with that spirit of festivity which people

feel who have no longer any occasion to spare ; when Codadad addressed the party as follows : "Princes," said he, "I can no longer conceal from you who I am : you behold in me your brother Codadad. I owe my being, as well as yourselves, to the king of Harran. I was educated by the king of Samaria ; and the Princess Pirouzè is my mother. Madam," added he, addressing himself to the princess of Deryabar, "pardon me, if to you I have made a mystery of my birth. I might, perhaps, had I discovered it sooner, have spared you some unpleasant reflections, which you can scarcely have failed to make on a marriage that must have appeared to you so very unequal." "No, sir," replied the princess, "the sentiments of regard with which you first inspired me have been strengthened every moment ; nor was it at all necessary to my happiness that you should be able to claim the high origin you have now discovered."

The princes congratulated Codadad on his birth, and expressed to him every outward mark of joy, though in the bottom of their hearts they were ill at ease ; their hatred indeed to so amiable a brother augmented every moment. In the middle of the night, withdrawing to a retired place, they held a council together, while Codadad and the princess were enjoying, in their tent, the sweets of repose. These ungrateful, these envious wretches, forgetting what they owed to the courageous son of Pirouzè—that, without his aid, they would have been all devoured by the negro, took the horrid resolution of assassinating him. "There is nothing else we can do," said one of the villains. "The king, as soon as he shall know that this stranger, whom he loves so much, is his son, and that he has had sufficient prowess alone to overpower a giant whom our united strength was unable to resist, will load him with caresses, will be incessant in his praise, and declare him his heir, to the prejudice of all his other sons, who will be obliged to prostrate themselves before this brother, and yield him obedience." To these words he added many others, which made so strong an impression on their jealous minds, that they sallied forth on the instant with the hopes of finding Codadad asleep. In this helpless state they fell upon him with a thousand strokes of their poniards, and leaving him apparently dead in the arms of the princess, they departed, directing their course to the city of Harran, where they arrived the next day.

The king their father was much delighted at their return ; and the more so as he had despaired of ever seeing them again. He inquired the cause of their delay, which they took especial care to conceal ; they mentioned not a word either of the negro or Codadad, but merely stated, that not being able to resist the curiosity they felt to visit the country, they made some stay in several of the neighbouring cities.

In the mean time, Codadad, weltering in his blood, and showing hardly any symptoms of life, lay stretched in his tent, attended by the princess his wife, who seemed scarcely less to be pitied than himself. She filled the air with her cries, tore her hair, and bathed the body of her husband with her tears, "Ah, Codadad !" she exclaimed every moment, "my dear Codadad ! is it you whom I now behold on the confines of the grave ? whose can be the cruel hands that have reduced you to this state ? Can I believe that they are your own brothers who have thus dreadfully mangled you ; brothers, who owe their life to your valour ? No ! they are rather demons, who, assuming the appearance of persons so dear, have come hither to tear you from existence. Ah, barbarians ! could ye thus repay with the vilest ingratitude the service he has done you ? But why, unhappy Codadad, should I lay the blame on your brothers ? It is to me alone that you owe your death : you have desired to join your fate with mine, and therefore all the ill fortune which has pursued me since I left the palace of my father has fallen upon you. O Heaven, by whose hard decree I am condemned to lead a wandering, wretched life, if you

prohibit me from having a husband, why am I allowed to meet with any one who desires to marry me? This is the second I have been deprived of just as I began to feel an attachment for him."

It was in such passionate expressions as these, and others even more affecting, that the unhappy princess of Deryabar gave utterance to her grief, while she saw the unfortunate Codadad lying senseless before her. He was not, however, wholly gone; he still continued to breathe, which, being observed by the princess his wife, she ran instantly towards a large town, which appeared in the plain, in order to provide a surgeon. She found one, who returned with her immediately; but when they arrived at the tent, Codadad could nowhere be found; they searched everywhere for him, but in vain; at length they concluded that some wild beast had seized and devoured him. The princess again gave vent to the most bitter cries and lamentations, in a manner the most distressing that can be imagined. The surgeon was much affected at what he beheld, and being very unwilling to abandon the lady in her present affliction, proposed to her to return to the town; and made her an offer of his house and services.

She suffered herself to be persuaded; the surgeon therefore conducted her to his house, and without knowing in the least who she was, treated her with all imaginable attention and respect. He endeavoured, in his conversation, to bring forward every topic of consolation; but all his efforts failed, for he only increased the sorrows he was desirous to assuage. "Madam," said he to her one day, "I entreat you, communicate to me all your distresses. Tell me, what is your country, and what your condition; I may perhaps be able to give you good advice, when I am informed of all the circumstances of your misfortune. You now do nothing but afflict yourself, without reflecting that it is often possible to discover remedies even for the most desperate evils."

The surgeon spoke with so much eloquence, that he at length prevailed upon the princess to relate to him all her adventures: when she had finished her story, he addressed her in his turn: "Madam," said he, "since circumstances are in this state, allow me to represent to you that you ought not to abandon yourself thus to grief. Endeavour rather to arm yourself with sufficient fortitude to perform what your situation demands: your character and duty as a wife call upon you to revenge your husband. I am ready, if you please, to serve as your attendant. Let us go to the king of Harran's court; he is a good and just prince: you will have only to represent in true colours the treatment which Prince Codadad has received from his brothers, and I am persuaded he will do you justice." "I submit to your reasons," replied the princess; "yes, I feel that the disastrous fate of my dear husband calls upon me for vengeance; and as you are so kind and generous as to offer to accompany me, I am ready to depart." She had no sooner formed this resolution than the surgeon undertook to provide two camels, and on these they set out upon their journey, and soon arrived at the city of Harran.

They alighted at the first caravansera they met with; they inquired of the master what was the news of the court. "It is," said he, "at present in great distress. The king had a son, who was living with him here for a long time under a feigned character, and no one knows what has become of him. A wife of his majesty, named Pirouzè, the mother of the prince, has occasioned innumerable inquiries to be made, but they have all hitherto proved fruitless. Every one is concerned for the young prince, as he was possessed of great merit. The king has forty-nine other sons, all by different mothers, but there is not one amongst them who is worthy to console the king for the death of Codadad: I say the death, for it is not possible he can be still living, since, notwithstanding all the search that has been made, he has not been yet heard of."

The surgeon was of opinion, after having heard this account from the master of the caravansera, that the proper plan for the princess of Deryabar to pursue, was to go to Pirouzè; but this step could hardly be taken without danger, and required many precautions. It was to be apprehended, that if the sons of the king of Harran heard of the arrival and intention of their sister-in-law, they would find means of taking her off before she should be able to speak to the mother of Codadad. The surgeon, having made all these reflections, and being sensible of the danger to which he himself might be exposed, was anxious to conduct the affair with all possible prudence; he begged, therefore, the princess to continue at the caravansera, while he went to the palace, in order to discover in what manner he might with the greatest safety introduce her to the mother of Codadad.

He then bent his course to the city, and continued his way towards the palace as a man who was drawn thither from no other motive than a desire to see the court, when he perceived a lady mounted upon a mule, richly caparisoned; she was followed by a troop of females, who were also mounted upon mules, and by a great number of guards and black slaves. As she approached, the people formed themselves in two rows in order to see her pass, and saluted her with their faces prostrate on the earth. The surgeon saluted her in the same manner, after which he inquired of a calender who was near him, whether this lady was not one of the king's wives. "Yes, brother," replied the calender, "she is one, and that one whom the people most love and honour, because she is the mother of Prince Codadad, whose renown must have reached your ears."

The surgeon did not wait to hear any more; he followed Pirouzè to a mosque, which she entered, in order to distribute alms, and to attend the public prayers, which the king had ordered for the return of Codadad. The people, who interested themselves extremely in the fate of this young prince, ran in crowds to join their vows to those of the priests; so much so, that the mosque was soon completely filled. The surgeon made his way through the multitude, and advanced near the guards of Pirouzè, where he heard all the prayers. When the princess was about to depart, he accosted one of her slaves, and said to him in a whisper, "Brother, I have a very important secret to reveal to the princess Pirouzè. Can I, by your means, be introduced into her apartment?" "If this secret," answered the slave, "concerns Prince Codadad, I can venture to promise that you shall on this very day be allowed the audience you wish; but if it concerns anything else, it will be useless for you to make any attempt to be presented to the princess; she is at this time, incapable of attending to anything unconnected with her son, nor does she choose to speak on any other subject." "It is on this subject alone that I wish to address her," replied the surgeon. "If that be the case," returned the slave, "you have only to follow us to the palace, and you shall soon have the opportunity you desire."

The slave accordingly, as soon as Pirouzè was returned to her apartment, came to inform her, that an unknown person had something of great importance to communicate to her, and that it concerned Prince Codadad. He had no sooner pronounced these words, than Pirouzè showed the most lively impatience to obtain an interview with the stranger. The slave introduced him immediately into the cabinet of the princess, who sent out all her women with the exception of two, whom she honoured with her confidence. As soon as she saw the surgeon, she demanded of him with much precipitation, what it was that he had to communicate concerning her son. "Madam," answered the surgeon, having first prostrated his face to the earth, "it is a long story that I have to tell you, in which are many events that will doubtless surprise you." He then gave her a full account of everything that had happened between Codadad and his brothers, which she listened to with the most eager attention;

but when he came to speak of the assassination, this tender mother, as if she had been struck with the blows given to her son, fell senseless upon a sofa. Her two women flew eagerly to her assistance, and used every means to restore her; and when she was able to attend, the surgeon proceeded in his narrative. When he had finished, the princess said to him: "Return to the princess of Deryabar, and inform her from me, that the king will soon acknowledge her for his daughter-in-law; and with respect to yourself, be assured that your services will be well rewarded."

After the surgeon was gone, Pirouzè remained on the sofa in all the excess of grief that can be imagined, the remembrance of her dear Codadad exciting every tender emotion in her breast. "O my son," said she, "shalt I then never more behold thee? Art thou, alas! gone for ever? When I permitted thee to depart from Samaria to visit this court; when I received your last tender farewell, little did I imagine that, far distant from me, a cruel death awaited thee. O unhappy Codadad! wherefore didst thou leave me? Thou couldst not, it is true, have acquired so much glory; but thou wouldst have been still alive, and not have cost thy mother so much affliction." In saying these words she wept bitterly; and her two confidential women, participating in her grief, mingled their tears with hers.

While they were thus afflicting themselves, all seeming to vie with each other in the expression of their sorrow, the king entered the apartment, and observing the state they were in, inquired of Pirouzè, whether she had heard any bad news of Codadad. "Ah, sire!" said she, "all is over; my dear son is no more; and to increase my woe, I am precluded from paying him funeral honours, as, according to all appearances, his beloved remains have become a prey to ravenous beasts." At the same time she related to him everything the surgeon had told her, and did not fail to enlarge on the cruel manner in which Codadad had been murdered by his brothers.

The king did not give her time to finish her narrative; transported with rage, and giving way to his passion: "Madam," said he to the princess, "these perfidious wretches, whose cold and cruel treachery has occasioned you these bitter tears, and given to me, their father, the most poignant affliction, shall soon experience the punishment they deserve." Having thus spoken, the prince, with fury sparkling in his eyes, repaired to the hall of audience, where his courtiers, and such of the people as had any petitions to prefer, were waiting for him. They were astonished when they beheld his enraged countenance. Imagining that he had conceived anger against his subjects, their hearts were struck cold with terror. He ascended his throne, and desiring his grand vizier to approach, "Hassan," said he to him, "I have an order to give you: go immediately and take a thousand soldiers of my guard, and seize on all the princes my sons; shut them up in the tower where assassins are confined; and take care that my orders be performed with as much despatch as possible." All who were present trembled at this extraordinary order; while the grand vizier, without answering a word, put his hand upon his head to express that he was ready to obey, and left the hall, in order to go and execute immediately the king's command; at which, however, he was much surprised. In the mean time, the king dismissed the persons who were come to solicit audience; and publicly declared, that for the ensuing month he would not be spoken with on any matter of business whatever. He was still in the hall when the vizier returned: "Well, vizier," said he, "are all my sons in the tower?" "Yes, sire," replied the minister, "you are obeyed." "It is not sufficient," replied the king; "I have another order to give you." Having said this, he left the hall of audience, and returned to the apartment of Pirouzè with the vizier, who followed him. He desired to know of this princess where

the widow of Codadad was lodged, of which the women of Pirouzè informed him, for the surgeon had not omitted to mention it. The king, then, turning towards his minister, said : "Go to that caravansera, and conduct hither a young princess who lodges there ; and observe to treat her with all the respect due to her rank."

The vizier was not long in obeying this order : being mounted on horseback, with all the emirs and other considerable persons of the court, he repaired to the caravansera where the princess of Deryabar resided, to whom he showed his order ; and at the same time presented her, on the part of the king, a beautiful white mule, with a bridle and saddle of gold, elegantly ornamented with rubies and emeralds. She immediately mounted it, and, surrounded by all the considerable persons of the court, took the way to the palace. The surgeon accompanied her, mounted also upon a handsome Tartarian horse, which the vizier had ordered to be given him. Every one ran to their windows, or into the streets, to see so magnificent a cavalcade ; and as it was soon reported that the princess whom they were thus conducting to court with so much state was the wife of Codadad, nothing was heard but clamours of applause. The air resounded with incessant shouts of joy ; which would, without doubt, have been converted into groans, had they known the melancholy story of this young prince ; so much and so universally was he beloved.

The princess of Deryabar found the king waiting at the palace-gate to receive her : he took her by the hand, and conducted her to the apartment of Pirouzè, where a most affecting scene took place. The wife of Codadad found all her affliction renewed at the sight of the father and mother of her husband ; nor were the latter able to behold so near and dear a connexion of their son without being extremely agitated. She threw herself at the king's feet, and after having bathed them with her tears, was seized with so violent a paroxysm of grief, as to choke all utterance. Pirouzè was not in a less deplorable state, penetrated to the soul by the affliction she saw and experienced. The king was so wholly subdued by the sight of these affecting objects, that he appeared for a time as if his sense and reason had left him. These three persons, mingling their sighs and tears, continued for a long time in a tender and mournful silence. The princess of Deryabar, being at length in some measure recovered from her oppression, related the adventure of the castle, and the cruel fate of Codadad ; and then demanded justice on the princes. "Yes, madam," said the king to her, "these ungrateful wretches shall surely perish : but it will be first necessary to make known the death of Codadad, in order that the punishment of his brothers may not revolt the minds of my subjects. Besides, although we have not the body of my son, it is not the less necessary to pay him the last honours." He then addressed himself to his vizier, and ordered him to have a dome of white marble erected in the beautiful plain in the midst of which the city of Harran stands ; in the mean time, he provided in his palace a most splendid apartment for the princess of Deryabar, whom he acknowledged as his daughter-in-law.

Hassan set about his work with so much diligence, and employed so much assistance, that the dome was finished in a few days. A tomb was erected under it, upon which a figure, representing Codadad was placed. As soon as the work was finished the king ordered prayers to be performed, and appointed a day for the funeral rites of his son.

This day being arrived, all the inhabitants of the city were dispersed about the plain to see the ceremony, which was conducted in the following manner :—

The king, attended by his vizier and principal lords of the court, proceeded towards the dome : when arrived at the place, he with his attendants entered it, and they seated themselves on carpets of black satin, flowered with gold :

after this came a large troop of guards on horseback, who, with their heads bowed down, and their eyes nearly closed, approached the dome. They encompassed it twice, observing the most profound silence; but on the third time, they stopped before the entrance, and said one after another in a loud voice, "O prince, son of the king, were it possible, by the keen stroke of our scimitars, and the display of our valour, to relieve the severity of thy fate, we should soon restore thee to the light: but the King of kings has commanded, and the angel of death has obeyed." Having uttered these words, they retired to give room to a hundred old men, who were all mounted upon black mules, which formed a striking contrast to their long and snowy beards.

These were persons of an austere life, who from an early age had lived concealed in caves, never appearing to human view, except when they came forward to attend the obsequies of the king of Harran, or any of his royal house. These venerable personages carried each on his head a large book, which he held with one hand; they all of them made the circuit of the dome three times without speaking: stopping afterwards at the entrance of it, one of them pronounced these words, "O prince, what is there that we can do for thee? If either prayers or knowledge could restore thee to life, we would wipe thy feet with our white beards, we would address thee in speeches of wisdom; but the King of the universe has taken thee away for ever."

This part of the ceremony being concluded, the old men retired to a distance from the dome, and immediately fifty young females of exquisite beauty approached. They were all mounted on small white horses, were without veils, and carried in their hands baskets of gold, filled with every sort of precious stones. They also went round the dome three times, and, stopping at the same place as the rest, the youngest of the party delivered the following speech: "O prince, formerly so beautiful, what succour canst thou hope from us? If it were possible that our charms could reanimate thee, we would readily become thy slaves; but thou art no longer sensible to beauty, nor hast occasion for aught that we can give!"

The young females having withdrawn, the king and his courtiers arose, and after this ceremony walked three times round the figure within the tomb; the king then broke silence in these terms: "O my dear son, light of my eyes; have I then lost thee for ever?" He accompanied these words with heavy sighs, and moistened the tomb with his tears, his courtiers following his example: after this ceremony, the door of the tomb was shut, and every one returned to the city. On the next day public prayers were repeated at the mosques, which were continued for eight days. It was the king's determination, that on the ninth, the princes his sons should be beheaded. All the people, indignant at the usage of Prince Codadad, seemed to expect their punishment with impatience. The scaffolds were beginning to be prepared; but they were obliged to put off the work for the present, because it was discovered on a sudden that the neighbouring princes, who had already made war on the king of Harran, were advancing with a more numerous army than before, and they were at no great distance from the city. It had been long known that they were preparing for war, but the preparations had occasioned but little alarm. This news, however, caused a general consternation, and furnished fresh matter of regret for the fate of Codadad, as this prince had so much signalized himself in the preceding war against the same enemies. "Ah!" said they, "if the intrepid Codadad were still alive, we should feel very little concern about these princes who are coming against us." In the mean time, the king, instead of giving way to any pusillanimous apprehension, made a hasty levy of his people, and having formed a considerable army, and being of too courageous a disposition to wait quietly within the walls till his enemies should come to seek him

there, he sallied out and marched forward to meet them. The enemy, on their side, having learned by their spies that the king of Harran was advancing to attack them, waited in the plain, and disposed their army in order of battle.

The king had no sooner perceived them, than he also arranged and disposed his troops for combat. He commanded them to sound the charge, and made his attack with great vigour; the enemy resisted in the same manner: much blood was shed on both sides, and for a long time, victory hung doubtful. It was at last about to declare itself for the enemies of the king of Harran, who, being more numerous, were on the point of surrounding the king, when on a sudden there appeared in the plain a large body of horsemen, who approached the combatants in good order. The view of these fresh soldiers equally astonished both parties, who knew not what to think of them; but they did not long remain in a state of uncertainty. This troop advanced, attacked the enemies of the king of Harran in flank, and charged with so much fury, that they instantly put them in disorder, and very soon to rout. They did not remain long in this state; they pursued them briskly, and cut almost the whole of their army in pieces.

The king of Harran, who had observed all that had passed with much attention, had greatly admired the intrepidity of the horsemen by whose unexpected aid the victory had been determined in his favour. He had been particularly delighted with their chief, whom he had observed fighting with extraordinary valour; and was anxious to know the name of this generous hero. Impatient to see and to thank him, he sought to join him, while the conqueror himself was advancing towards the king. The two princes nearly approached, when the king of Harran recognised in this brave warrior, who thus brought him such important succour and had so completely subdued his foes, his beloved son Codadad. The king remained motionless with excess of surprise and delight. "Sire," said Codadad to him, "you have, without doubt, much reason to be astonished at thus seeing on a sudden before your majesty, a man whom you have probably supposed to be dead. I should have been so, if Heaven had not preserved me, in order that I might still serve you against your enemies." "Ah, my son," replied the king, "is it possible that you can be restored to me? Alas! I had wholly despaired of ever seeing you more." In saying this, he held out his arms to the young prince, who willingly resigned himself to his affectionate embraces.

"I perfectly know, my son," said the king, after he had for a long time encircled him in his arms, "I perfectly know in what way your brothers have repaid you the service you rendered them, in delivering them from the hands of the negro; but you shall be revenged on their treachery to-morrow. In the mean time repair to the palace; your mother, who has shed so many tears on your account, is waiting to rejoice with me at the defeat of our enemies: what excessive joy will it give her when she learns that I owe my victory to you!" "Sire," said Codadad, "allow me to ask you how you became acquainted with the adventure of the castle? Has any one of my brothers, wounded by the stings of conscience, made a confession to you?" "No," replied the king, "it is the princess of Deryabar who has informed us of everything: she is lately arrived at my palace, where she came for the avowed purpose of demanding justice on your guilty brothers." Codadad was transported with joy at learning that the princess his wife was at the court. "Come, sire," he exclaimed with transport, "let us wait on my mother, who expects us; I burn with impatience to dry up her tears, as well as those of the princess of Deryabar."

The king immediately returned towards the city at the head of his army,

which he soon dismissed : he re-entered his palace amidst all the gratulations of victory. The air resounded with the acclamations of the people, who thronged around him ; and earnestly petitioned Heaven to prolong his days, while the name of Codadad was raised to the skies. These two princes found Pirouzè and her daughter-in-law waiting to congratulate the king ; but it is impossible to express the transports of delight with which they were agitated when they saw the young prince attending his father. Their embraces were mixed with tears, but of a very different nature from those they had before shed on his account. After these four persons had indulged in all those delightful emotions which the union of blood and of the tenderest affections could not fail to excite, the king and the ladies were anxious to know of Codadad by what miracle it happened that he was yet alive.

He informed them, that a peasant, mounted upon a mule, had by accident entered the tent where he lay senseless ; this person seeing him alone, and pierced with so many wounds, had taken him upon his mule, and conducted him to his house, where he applied a variety of bruised herbs, which had cured him in a very short time. "When I found myself perfectly recovered," added he, "I thanked the peasant, and presented him with all the diamonds I possessed : I then set forward towards the city of Harra ; but, having learned on the road that some neighbouring princes had formed an army, and were approaching to attack the subjects of his majesty, I made myself known in all the villages, and excited the zeal of the people to rise in their defence. I armed a great number of young people, and, putting myself at their head, arrived at the very time when the two armies were engaged."

When he had done speaking, the king said : "Let us return thanks to Heaven for having preserved Codadad ; but it is necessary that the traitors who intended his death should all of them this day perish." "Sire," replied the generous son of Pirouzè, "ungrateful and wicked as they undoubtedly are, remember, that they are of your own blood. As brothers, I pardon them their crime, and presume to request of you the same favour for them." These noble sentiments drew tears from the king ; he caused the people to be assembled, and declared Codadad his heir. He afterwards ordered them to bring forth the princes, who came forward loaded with irons. The son of Pirouzè loosed their chains, and embraced them, one after another, with as much cordiality as he had done in the court of the negro's castle. The people were charmed with the generous disposition displayed by Codadad, and bestowed on him a thousand praises. The surgeon was loaded with benefits, as a reward for the important services he had rendered to the princess of Deryabar.

As the sultana Schcherazadè had formerly related the history of Ganem in so agreeable a manner, that the sultan of India, her husband, could not help declaring to her that he had heard it with very great pleasure, "Sire," replied the sultana, "I have no doubt but your majesty had much satisfaction in seeing the caliph Haroun Alraschid change his opinion in favour of Ganem, his mother, and his sister Alcolomb ; and I suppose you must be much affected at the misfortunes of the one, and the ill-treatment shown to the others ; but I am persuaded, that if your majesty would listen to the story of *The Sleeper Awakened*, instead of all those emotions of indignation and compassion which that of Ganem must have excited in your heart, and with which it even still remains affected, this, on the contrary, would occasion you only satisfaction and joy."

At the title only of the story which the sultana had mentioned, Schahriar, who expected from it very entertaining and quite new adventures, would fain

have heard the narrative that very morning : but it was time to rise ; he therefore deferred it till the following morning, when this story served for many days and nights to preserve the sultana. Dinarzadé having called her at the appointed time, she began the narrative as follows :

THE STORY OF THE SLEEPER AWAKENED.

DURING the reign of the caliph Haroun Alraschid, there lived at Bagdad a very rich merchant, whose wife was far advanced in years. They had an only son called Abou Hassan, about thirty years of age, who had been in every respect brought up with great strictness.

The merchant died, and Abou Hassan, who was his sole heir, took possession of the vast wealth which his father had amassed during his life with great parsimony and a strong attachment to business. The son, whose views and inclination were very different from those of his father, made a very opposite use of his fortune. As his father had not allowed him in his youth more than was barely sufficient for his maintenance, and as the latter had always envied young men of his own age who had been more liberally supplied, and who never denied themselves any of those pleasures in which youth too readily indulges, he determined in his turn to distinguish himself by making a figure equal to the great wealth with which fortune had favoured him. For this purpose he divided his fortune into two parts ; with the one he purchased estates in the country and houses in the city ; but although they would produce a revenue sufficient to enable him to live at his ease, he resolved to let the sums arising from them accumulate : the other half, which consisted of a considerable sum of ready money, was destined to repair the time he thought he had lost under the severe restraint in which his father had kept him till his death : but he laid it down as an indispensable rule, which he determined inviolably to keep, not to expend more than this sum in the irregular life he proposed to lead.

With this design Abou Hassan soon formed a society of young men, nearly of his own age and rank in life, and who thought only of making their time pass agreeably. To further this end, he did not content himself with treating them day and night, and giving the most splendid entertainments, where the most delicious viands and wines of the most exquisite flavours were served in abundance, he added music to all this, collecting the best singers of both sexes. His young friends, on their part, while indulging in the excesses of the table, often joined their voices to those of the musicians ; and with the instruments that accompanied them, formed a concert of delightful harmony. These feasts were generally terminated by balls, to which the best dancers of both sexes in the city of Bagdad were invited. All these amusements, which were daily varied by new pleasures, were so extremely expensive to Abou Hassan, that he could not continue so profuse a style of living beyond one year. The large sum of money which he had devoted to this prodigality, and the year, ended together. From the moment he ceased giving these entertainments his friends disappeared ; he never even met them in any place he frequented. In short, they shunned him whenever they saw him ; and if by accident he joined any one of them, and wished to detain him in conversation, he excused himself under various pretences.

Abou Hassan was more affected by the strange conduct of his friends, who abandoned him with so much indignity and ingratitude, after all the demonstrations and protestations of friendship they had made him, and of having the

most inviolable attachment to him, than at the loss of the money he had so foolishly expended on them. Melancholy and thoughtful, with his head sunk upon his breast, and a countenance strongly evincing unhappiness, he entered his mother's apartment, and seated himself at the end of a sofa, at some distance from her.

"What is the matter, my son?" said his mother, on seeing him in this state: "Why are you so altered, so cast down, and so different from your former self? Had you lost everything you have in the world, you could not appear to be more miserable. I know the dreadful expense you have lived at, and ever since you have been engaged in it I thought you would soon have very little money left. You were master of your fortune, and if I did not endeavour to oppose your irregular proceedings, it was because I knew the prudent precaution you had taken, of leaving the half of your fortune untouched; thus circumstanced, I do not see why you should be plunged into this deep melancholy." Abou Hassan burst into tears at these words, and in the midst of his grief, "My dear mother," he cried, "I know from woeful experience how insupportable poverty is. Yes, I feel very sensibly, that as the setting of the sun deprives us of the splendour of that luminary, so poverty deprives us of every sort of enjoyment. It is that which buries in oblivion all the praises that have been bestowed on us, and all the good that has been said of us, before we were involved in it; it reduces us at every step to take measures to avoid being observed, and to pass whole nights in shedding the bitterest tears. In short, he who is poor is regarded but as a stranger, even by his relations and his friends. You know, my mother," continued he, "the manner in which I have conducted myself towards my friends for a year past. I have exhausted my finances by entertaining them in the most sumptuous manner, and now that I cannot continue to do so, I find myself abandoned by them all. When I say that I have it no longer in my power to entertain them as I have done; I allude to the money I had set apart to be employed for the use I have made of it. I thank God for having inspired me with the idea of reserving what I call my income, under the condition and oath I made not to touch it for such foolish dissipation: I will strictly adhere to this oath, and I have resolved on the good use I will make of what happily remains; but first I wish to see to what extremity my friends, if they deserve that name, will carry their ingratitude. I will see them all one after another; and when I shall have represented to them the lengths I have gone from my regard to them, I will solicit them to raise amongst them such a sum of money as may serve in some measure to relieve me from the unhappy situation to which I am reduced by contributing to their amusement. But I mean to take this step, as I have already said, only to see whether I shall find in them the least sentiment of gratitude."

"My son," replied the mother of Abou Hassan, "I do not take upon me to dissuade you from executing your plan; but I can tell you beforehand that your hope is unfounded. Believe me, it is useless to attempt this trial; you will not receive any assistance but from the preservation of your property which you made for yourself. I plainly see, you do not yet know those men who are commonly styled friends among people of your description, but you will soon know them: I pray to God it may be in the way I wish—that is, for your good." "My dear mother," returned Abou Hassan, "I am convinced of the truth of what you tell me: but it will be a more convincing proof to me of their baseness and want of feeling if I learn it by my own experience."

Abou Hassan set out immediately, and he timed his visits so well, that he found all his friends at home. He represented to them the great distress he was in; and besought them to lend him money to such amount as would be of

affectual assistance to him ; he even promised to engage himself to every one individually to return the sums they should lend him as soon as his affairs were re-established, without, however, letting them know that his distresses were in a great measure arising from them, that they might have an opportunity of displaying their generosity. And he did not forget to hold out to them the hope that he might one day be again in a situation to entertain them as he had done.

None of his convivial companions were the least affected by Abou Hassan's distresses and afflictions, which he represented in the most lively colours, hoping he should persuade them to relieve him. He had even the mortification to find that many of them pretended not to know him, and did not even remember ever to have seen him. He returned home, his heart filled with grief and indignation. " Ah ! my mother," cried he, as he entered her apartment, " you have told me the truth ; instead of friends, I have found only perfidious, ungrateful men, unworthy of my friendship. It is enough ; I renounce them for ever, and I promise you never to see them more."

Abou Hassan remained firm in the resolution he had made ; for this purpose he took every prudent precaution to avoid being tempted to break it, and took an oath never, during his life, to ask any man who was an inhabitant of Bagdad to eat with him. He then took the strong box, in which was deposited the money arising from his rents, from the spot where he had laid it by, and put it in the place of that he had just emptied. He resolved to take from it, for the expenses of each day, only a regular and sufficient sum, to enable him to invite one single person to sup with him, and he took a second oath that the person should not be an inhabitant of Bagdad, but a stranger, who should have arrived there that very day ; and that he would send him away the next morning, after giving him only one night's lodging.

To execute this plan, Abou Hassan took care every morning to make the necessary provision for this limited hospitality, and towards the close of the day, he went and sat at the end of the bridge of Bagdad ; and as soon as he saw a stranger, let his appearance be what it would, he accosted him with great civility, and invited him to sup and lodge at his house the first night of his arrival ; and after having informed him of the rule he had laid down, and the bounds he had set to his hospitality, he conducted him to his house.

The repast with which Abou Hassan treated his guest was not sumptuous, but it was such as a man might be well satisfied with, especially as there was no want of good wine. They remained at table till almost midnight, and instead of entertaining his guest, as is customary, with politics, family affairs, or business, he affected, on the contrary, to talk gaily and agreeably of indifferent things : he was naturally pleasant, good-humoured, and amusing, and whatever the subject was, he knew how to give such a turn to his conversation as would enliven the most melancholy of his visitors.

When he took leave the next morning of his guest, " To whatever place you go," said Abou Hassan, " may God preserve you from every sort of disquiet ; when I invited you to sup with me yesterday, I informed you of the rule I had laid down to myself : for which reason, you must not take it ill if I tell you that we shall never drink together again, and even that we shall never see each other any more at my house, or any other place. I have my reasons for this conduct. May the Almighty guard you !"

Abou Hassan observed this rule with great exactness ; he never looked at or spoke to the strangers any more whom he had once received in his house : when he met them in the streets, the squares, or public assemblies, he appeared not to see them ; he even turned from them if they accosted him ; in short, he never had the least intercourse with them. For a long time he conducted himself in

this manner, when one day, a little before sunset, as he was seated in his usual manner at the end of the bridge, the caliph Haroun Alraschid appeared, but so much disguised, he could not be known.

Although this monarch had ministers and officers of justice, who performed their duty with great exactness, he wished nevertheless to look into everything himself; with this design, as we have already seen, he often went in different disguises through the city of Bagdad; he did not even neglect its environs; and on this account he made it a custom to go on the first day of every month into the great roads which lead to the city, sometimes on one side, and sometimes on the other. That day, the first of the month, he appeared disguised as a merchant from Moussoul, who had just landed on the other side of the bridge, and was followed by a slave of a large and stout figure.

As the caliph had, under his disguise, a grave and respectable air, Abou Hassan, who believed him to be a merchant from Moussoul, rose from the place on which he was seated, and after having saluted him, and kissed his hand with a courteous air, "Sir," said he, "I congratulate you on your happy arrival; I entreat you would do me the honour to sup with me, and pass the night at my house, in order to recover yourself after the fatigue of your journey." And to induce him to comply with his request, he told him in few words the rule he had laid down to himself of every day receiving, if possible, and for one night only, the first stranger who presented himself.

The caliph found something so singular in the whimsical taste of Abou Hassan, that he felt an inclination to know the foundation of it. Without quitting the character of the merchant, he assured him he could not better reply to so great and unexpected a civility on his arrival at Bagdad, than by accepting the obliging invitation he had just received; that he had only to lead the way, and he was ready to follow him.

Abou Hassan, who was ignorant of the high rank of the guest which chance had just presented to him, conducted himself towards the caliph as he would do towards his equal. He carried him to his house, showed him into an apartment very neatly furnished, where he seated him on a sofa in the most honourable place. Supper was ready, and the cloth was spread. Abou Hassan's mother, who was an adept in the art of cooking, sent in three dishes: in the middle a fine capon, garnished with four fat pullets; of the other two dishes, the one was a fat goose, the other a ragout of pigeons. There was nothing more; but these dishes were well chosen, and excellent of their kind.

Abou Hassan placed himself at table opposite his guest, and the caliph and he began eating with a good appetite, helping themselves to what they liked best, without speaking, and even without drinking, according to the custom of their country. When they had done, the slave of the caliph brought them water to wash in, and in the meantime the mother of Abou Hassan took away the dishes, and brought the dessert, which consisted of a variety of the fruits in season, such as grapes, peaches, apples, pears, and several kinds of cakes made of dried almonds; when the day closed, they lighted the candles, after which Abou Hassan put bottles and glasses before him, and took care that his mother provided supper for the caliph's slave.

When the pretended merchant of Moussoul and Abou Hassan were seated again at table, the latter, before he touched the fruit, took a cup, and filling it for himself first, he held it in his hand, "Sir," said he to the caliph, whom he took to be only a merchant, "you know as well as I do that the cock never drinks till he has called his hens about him to come and drink with him; I invite you then to follow my example. I know not what you may think of the matter, but for my own part, it seems that a man who hates wine, and would fain be thought wise, is certainly not so. Let such people go on with their

stupid and melancholy disposition, but let us enjoy ourselves ; I see pleasure sparkling in the cup, and it will assuredly be communicated to those who empty it."

While Abou Hassan was drinking—"I like this," said the caliph, as he took hold of the cup that was intended for him; "you are what may be called a jolly fellow. I love you for your humour, and I expect you will fill mine as full in the same way."

Abou Hassan had no sooner drunk, than filling the cup which the caliph held out, "Taste it, sir," said he, "you will find it excellent." "I am well satisfied of it," returned the caliph, laughing; "no doubt a man like you knows how to procure for yourself the best of everything."

While the caliph was drinking, "One need only look at you," replied Abou Hassan, "to observe at first sight that you are one of those who have seen the world and know how to enjoy it. If my house," added he, in some lines of Arabian poetry, "were capable of any feeling, and alive to the pleasure of receiving you within its walls, it would loudly express its joy, and throwing itself at your feet, would exclaim, 'Ah! what delight; what happiness is it to see myself honoured with the presence of a person so respectable, and at the same time so condescending as to deign to come under my roof.' In short, sir, my joy is complete to have met to-day with a man of your merit."

These sallies of Abou Hassan very much diverted the caliph, who was naturally of a merry turn, and took pleasure in inducing him to drink, that by the gaiety which wine would excite he might become better acquainted with him. To engage him in conversation he asked him his name, and what was his employment, and how he passed his time. "Sir," said he, "my name is Abou Hassan; I have lost my father, who was a merchant, not indeed of the richest; but, however, one of those who at Bagdad live very much at their ease. At his death, he left me an inheritance sufficient to support me creditably in the rank I held. As his behaviour towards me had been very severe, and at the time of his death I had passed the best part of my youth under great restraint, I wished to try to make up for all the time I conceived I had lost."

"In this, nevertheless," continued Abou Hassan, "I regulated my proceedings in a manner very different from that of young people in general. They usually give themselves up to intemperance, without thought: they indulge in every dissipation, till reduced to the last sequin, and then exercise a forced repentance against their will all the remainder of their life. To avoid this distress, I divided my property into two parts—the one consisting of rents, the other of ready money. I destined the ready money for the support of my proposed expenses; and made a firm resolution not to touch my rents. I formed a society of people I knew, and those nearly of my own age, and with the ready money, which I freely lavished, I made every day the most splendid entertainments, in such a manner as to gratify all our wishes. But this did not last long: at the end of a year, I found my purse empty, and at once all my convivial friends disappeared; I made it my business to go and see them all in turn, I represented to each the wretched state to which I was reduced, but no one offered me any assistance. I therefore renounced their friendship; and, reducing my expenses within the limits of my income, I so far retrenched as to have no society at all, but with the first stranger I every day should meet, on his arrival at Bagdad, with this condition, that I entertained him for that day only. I have told you the rest, and I thank my good fortune, which to-day has thrown in my way a stranger of so much merit."

The caliph, very well satisfied with this explanation, said to Abou Hassan, "I cannot enough commend the step you took, in acting with so much caution,

when you entered upon your free course of life, and in conducting yourself so differently from young men in general ; and I respect you still more, that you kept your resolution with so much steadiness as you have done. You walked in a very slippery path, and I cannot sufficiently wonder, after you had spent all your ready money, that you had the moderation to confine yourself within the income arising from your rents, and that you did not mortgage your estate. To tell you what I think of the matter, I firmly believe that you are the only man of pleasure that ever did, or ever will, conduct himself in such a manner. In short, I declare that I envy your good fortune ; you are the happiest man on earth, thus to have every day the company of a respectable person, with whom you can converse so agreeably, and to whom you give an opportunity of telling the world the good reception you have afforded him. But we forget ourselves ; neither you nor I perceive how long we have been talking without drinking : come drink, and I will pledge you." The caliph and Abou Hassan continued drinking a long time and conversing most agreeably together.

The night was far advanced, and the caliph, pretending to be much fatigued with his day's journey, said to Abou Hassan, that he was much inclined to repose himself. "Nor would I wish," added he, "that, on my account, you should lose any of your sleep. Before we part (for perhaps I shall be gone to-morrow from your house before you awake), I have the satisfaction of saying how sensible I am of the civility, the good cheer, and the hospitality, with which you have treated me in so obliging a manner. I am only concerned to know in what way I can best prove my gratitude. I entreat you to inform me, and you shall find that I am not an ungrateful person. It is hardly possible that a man like you should not have some business to be done, some want to be supplied, some wish to be gratified. Open your heart to me, and speak freely. Though a merchant, as you see me, I am in a situation, either by myself or by means of my friends, to confer an obligation."

At these offers of the caliph, whom Abou Hassan all along supposed to be a merchant, "My good sir," he replied, "I am thoroughly persuaded that it is not out of mere compliment you address me in this generous manner. But, upon the word of a man of honour, I can assure you that I have no distress, no business, no want, that I have nothing to ask of anybody. I have not the smallest degree of ambition, as I have already told you, and am perfectly contented with my lot, so that I have only to thank you, as well for your kind offers as that you have had the goodness to confer upon me the honour of taking a poor refreshment at my house.

"I will say, nevertheless," continued Abou Hassan, "that one thing gives me some concern, without, however, materially disturbing my tranquillity. You know the city of Bagdad has several divisions, and that in every division there is a mosque and an iman, who assembles all the people of the division at the accustomed hours to join with him in prayer. The iman of this division is a very old man, of an austere countenance, and a complete hypocrite, if ever there was one in the world. He assembles four other dotards, my neighbours, very much of the same character, for a council, who meet regularly every day at his house. When they get together there is no sort of slander, calumny, and mischief, which they do not raise and propagate against me and against all the division ; they disturb our quiet, and stir up dissensions among us. They make themselves formidable to some and threaten others. They wish, in short, to be our masters, and that each of us should conduct himself according to their caprice, while at the same time they cannot govern themselves. To say the truth, I cannot bear to see them busying themselves with everything but the Koran, and that they cannot let their neighbours live in peace."

"So then," replied the caliph, "you seem desirous of finding means to

check this disorder?" "I do indeed," replied Abou Hassan; "and the only thing I would beg of God for this purpose is, that I should be caliph in the room of the Commander of the Faithful, our sovereign lord and master, Haroun Alraschid, for one day." "What would you do," demanded the caliph, "if that should happen?" "One very important thing would I do," replied Abou Hassan, "which would give satisfaction to all good people. I would order an hundred strokes on the soles of the feet to be given to each of the four old men, and four hundred to the iman himself, to teach them that it is not their business to disturb and vex their neighbours."

The caliph was much diverted with the conceit of Abou Hassan; and as he had naturally a turn for adventures, it suggested to him a desire to amuse himself with it in a very extraordinary manner. "Your wish pleases me the more," said the caliph, "because I see it springs from an honest heart, in a person who cannot bear that the malice of wicked men should go unpunished. I should have great pleasure in seeing the effect of it, and perhaps it is not impossible, that what you have imagined may come to pass. I am persuaded that the caliph would readily trust his power in your hands for twenty-four hours, if he were informed of your good intention, and the excellent use you would make of it. Although a merchant only, and a stranger, I am nevertheless not without a degree of interest, which may possibly forward this business."

"I see plainly," replied Abou Hassan, "that you are diverting yourself with my foolish fancy; and the caliph would laugh at it also if he came to the knowledge of a thing so ridiculous. It might indeed have the effect of inducing him to inquire into the conduct of the iman and his counsellors, and order them to be punished."

"I am by no means laughing at you," replied the caliph; "God forbid that I should cherish so unbecoming a thought of a person like you, who have entertained me so handsomely, though quite unknown to you; and I can assure you that the caliph himself would not laugh at you. But let us put an end to this conversation; it is near midnight, and time to go to bed."

"Well then," said Abou Hassan, "we will cut short our discourse, and I will not prevent you from taking your repose: but as there is a little wine still left in the bottle, we must finish that, if you please, and then we will retire. The only thing I have to recommend, is, when you leave the house to-morrow morning, if I should not be up, that you would not leave the door open, but that you would trouble yourself to shut it after you." This the caliph promised faithfully to do.

While Abou Hassan was speaking, the caliph laid hold of the bottle and the two cups. He helped himself first, and made Abou Hassan understand that he drank to him a cup of thanks. When he had done so, he slyly threw into Abou Hassan's cup a little powder which he had with him, and poured upon it the remainder of the bottle. Presenting it to Abou Hassan, "You have had the trouble," said he, "of helping me throughout the evening; the least I can do in return is to spare you that trouble now, for the last time: I beg you will take this cup from my hand, and drink this time for my sake."

Abou Hassan took the cup; and the better to prove to his guest with how much pleasure he accepted the honour done him, he swallowed the whole at a breath. But scarcely had he put the cup on the table, when the powder began to take effect. He instantly fell so fast asleep, and his head dropped almost upon his knees so suddenly, that the caliph could not help laughing. The slave of the caliph, by whom he was attended, had returned as soon as he had supped, and during some time had been on the spot ready to obey orders. "Place this man upon your shoulders," said the caliph to him, "but take care to notice

the spot where this house stands, that you may bring him back hither when I shall bid you."

The caliph, followed by his slave, with Abou Hassan on his shoulders, went out of the house, but without closing the door, as Abou Hassan had requested him; and he did so on purpose. When he arrived at the palace, he entered by a private door, and ordered the slave to follow him to his apartment, where all the officers of the bed-chamber were in waiting. "Undress this man," said he to them, "and lay him in my bed; I will afterwards tell you my intention."

The officers undressed Abou Hassan, they clothed him with the caliph's night-dress, and put him to bed, as they were ordered. Nobody in the palace had yet retired to rest. The caliph ordered all the ladies and officers of the court to attend; and when they were in his presence, "I desire," said he to them, "that all those who usually come to me when I rise, fail not in their attendance here to-morrow morning upon this man whom you see asleep in my bed; and that each perform the same services to him upon his waking, which are usually paid to me. I desire also that the same attentions be observed towards him as are due to my own person; and that he be obeyed in all that he shall command. Let him be refused nothing he may demand, nor be contradicted in anything he shall express a wish for. On every occasion, where it shall be proper to speak to or answer him, let him always be treated as the Commander of the Faithful. In one word, I require that no more attention be paid to my person by any one, all the time they are about him, than if he was really what I am, that is to say, caliph and Commander of the Faithful. Above all, let the utmost care be taken that the deception is carried through, even to the most trifling circumstance."

The officers and ladies, who soon perceived the caliph wished to amuse himself, answered only by a low bow, and from that moment, each of them for his own part prepared to contribute all in his power, in what related to his peculiar function to support his character with exactness.

Upon returning to the palace, the caliph had sent to summon the grand vizier Giafar by the first person in waiting he met with, and this minister had just arrived. The caliph said to him: "Giafar, I sent to you to warn you not to seem astonished, when, at the audience to-morrow morning, you shall see the man who is now asleep on my bed, seated upon my throne, and dressed in my robes of state. Address him in the same forms, and with the same respect you are in the habit of paying to me, and treat him exactly as if he were the Commander of the Faithful. Attend to him, and execute punctually all his orders, just as if they were mine. He will not fail to make large presents, and you will be charged with the distribution of them: do everything of that sort he shall order, even to the hazard of my treasury. Remember also, to warn my emirs, my ushers, and all the officers not within the palace to-morrow at the public audience, to pay him the same honours as to my person, and to act their part so well, that he shall be thoroughly deceived, and that the amusement I propose to myself, may not in the smallest instance be broken in upon. You may now retire; I have nothing further to order, only give me all the satisfaction in this matter which I demand."

After the grand vizier had retired, the caliph passed on to another apartment, and as he went to bed, he gave to Mesrour, chief of the eunuchs, the orders which were to be executed on his part, so that everything might succeed in the manner intended, both to fulfil the wish of Abou Hassan, and to see the use he would make of the caliph's powers and authority during the short time he desired to possess them. Above all, he enjoined him not to fail coming to call him at the usual hour, and before Abou Hassan was awake, because he wished to be present at all that should pass.

Mesrou awakened the caliph punctually at the time he was ordered. As soon as the latter had entered the room where Abou Hassan slept, he placed himself in an adjoining closet, whence he could observe, through a lattice, all that passed, without being himself seen. All the officers and the ladies who were to be present when Abou Hassan rose, came in at the same time, and were posted in their accustomed places, according to their rank, and in profound silence, just as if it had been the caliph himself who was rising, and ready to perform the duties for which they were destined.

As the day already began to break, and it was time to get up for early prayers before sunrise, the officer who was nearest Abou Hassan's pillow, applied to his nose a small piece of sponge dipped in vinegar.

Abou Hassan sneezed, turning his head without opening his eyes, and began to throw off a little phlegm, which they were ready to receive in a golden bason, that it might not fall upon the carpet and soil it. This was the common effect of the powder which the caliph had made him take, when, in proportion to the dose, it ceased in more or less time to cause the disposition to sleep for which it is given.

Abou Hassan, placing his head again upon the pillow, opened his eyes; and, as far as the little light there yet was permitted him, he saw himself in a large and magnificent chamber, superbly furnished, the ceiling of which was painted with various figures and elegant borders, and ornamented throughout with vases of massive gold, with tapestry and carpets of the richest kind. He found himself surrounded by young females of enchanting beauty, many of whom had different musical instruments, upon which they were preparing to play; and by black eunuchs, richly dressed, and standing, ranged in the humblest posture. As he cast his eyes upon the coverlet of the bed, he saw it was a beautiful crimson and gold brocade, ornamented with pearls and diamonds; and at the bedside there was a dress of the same materials, and equally enriched; and near it, on a cushion, a caliph's cap.

At the sight of these splendid objects, Abou Hassan was inexpressibly astonished and confounded. He looked upon the whole as a dream;—a dream, however, so truly to his own satisfaction, that he was desirous it might not prove one. "Well," said he, to himself, "I am caliph then; but," added he, a little after, on recovering himself, "I must not deceive myself;—it is a dream, merely an effect of the wish I formed in conversation with my guest;" so he shut his eyes again as if he intended to go to sleep.

At the same time a eunuch came near. "Commander of the Faithful," said he, respectfully, "your majesty will be pleased not to sleep again. It is time to rise for early prayer: the day begins to break." Abou Hassan, very much astonished at what he heard, said again to himself, "Am I awake, or do I sleep? No, I am certainly asleep," continued he, keeping his eyes still closed; "I must not doubt it."

"Commander of the Faithful," resumed the eunuch, a moment after, who observed that he gave no answer, nor showed any signs of intending to rise, "your majesty will allow me to repeat that it is time to rise, unless your majesty means to disregard the hour of morning prayer, which you are accustomed to attend, and the sun is on the point of rising."

"I was deceiving myself," said Abou Hassan immediately. "I am not asleep, I am awake; they who sleep never hear anything, and I certainly hear that I am spoken to." Then he opened his eyes again; it was now daylight, and he saw distinctly what he had before seen only imperfectly. He sat up in his bed, with a cheerful countenance, like a person much rejoiced at finding himself in a situation so far above his rank; and the caliph, who watched him without being himself seen, entered into his thoughts with great satisfaction.

Then the young women of the palacé bowed before Abou Hassan, with their faces towards the ground, and such of them as had instruments of music, saluted him on his first appearance with a concert of soft-toned flutes, hautboys, lutes, and various other instruments; this so enchanted him, and raised him to such an excess of delight, that he knew not where he was, and was quite beside himself. He recurred nevertheless to his first thought, and again doubted whether what he saw and heard was a dream or reality. He covered his eyes with his hands, and lowering his head, "What does all this mean?" he repeated to himself. "Where am I? what has happened to me? what is this palace? what mean these eunuchs, these officers so handsome and so well dressed? these damsels so beautiful, and these musicians so enchanting? Is it possible that I should not be able to distinguish whether I am dreaming, or whether I have all my senses about me?" At last, he took his hands from his face and opened his eyes, and looking up, he saw the sun darting his first rays through the window of the chamber in which he was.

At this moment, Mesrour, the chief of the eunuchs, came in, bowed with his face to the ground before Abou Hassan, and, as he raised himself, said, "Commander of the Faithful, your majesty will permit me to represent, that you have not been accustomed to rise so late, and that you have suffered the hour of morning prayer to pass unnoticed. Unless your majesty has had a bad night, or be otherwise indisposed, you will now be pleased to ascend your throne, to hold your council, and be seen as usual. The generals of your armies, the governors of your provinces, and the other great officers of your court, only wait the moment when the door of the council-chamber shall be open."

At this address of Mesrour, Abou Hassan was, in a manner, persuaded that he was not asleep, and that the situation in which he found himself, was not a dream. He was much perplexed, and equally confounded at the uncertainty he was in, and what part he should take. At length, he fixed his eyes upon Mesrour, and, in a serious tone, demanded of him, "Whom are you addressing? Who is it that you call Commander of the Faithful? you, of whom I know nothing: you must certainly take me for some other person."

Any other than Mesrour would have been disconcerted at Abou Hassan's questions; but, instructed by the caliph, he played his part wonderfully well. "My most honoured lord and master," cried he, "your majesty surely talks thus to me to-day in order to try me. Is not your majesty the Commander of the Faithful, the monarch of the world, from the east to the west, and upon earth vicar of the prophet, sent from God, who is master of all, both in Heaven and in earth? Your poor slave, Mesrour, has not forgotten all this, after so many years, that he has had the honour and happiness of paying his duty and services to your majesty. He should think himself the most miserable of men if he were to lose your good opinion. He most humbly entreats your majesty to have the goodness to restore him to your favour again; he is rather inclined to think some disagreeable dream has disturbed your majesty's repose to-night."

Abou Hassan burst into such a violent fit of laughter at hearing Mesrour say this, that he fell back upon his pillow, to the great joy of the caliph, who would have laughed as loud but for fear of putting an end to the pleasant scene, just as it was beginning, which he had determined to have exhibited before him.

Abou Hassan, after having laughed a long time in this posture, sat up again in his bed, and speaking to a little eunuch, as black as Mesrour, "Hark ye," said he, "tell me who I am." "Sire," said the little eunuch, in a very humble manner, "your majesty is Commander of the Faithful, and vicar upon earth of the Master of both worlds." "Thou art a liar, with thy face as black as pitch," replied Abou Hassan.

He then called one of the females, who was nearer to him than the rest. "Come hither, my beauty," said he, as he held out his hand towards her; "take the end of my finger, and bite it, that I may feel whether I am asleep or awake."

The damsel, who knew the caliph saw all that passed in the chamber, was delighted with an opportunity of showing how much she was capable of doing, where the business was to afford him amusement. She came towards Abou Hassan with the most serious air imaginable, and closing her teeth gently upon the end of his finger, which he had held out to her, she occasioned him to feel a little pain.

Quickly withdrawing his hand, "I am not asleep," said Abou Hassan immediately, "I am most assuredly not asleep. By what miracle is it then, that in one night I have become caliph; this is the most surprising, the most marvellous thing in the world." Speaking again to the same damsel, "Now, by the blessing of God," said he, "in whom you put your trust, as well as myself, I beseech you tell me exactly the truth: Am I really and truly Commander of the Faithful?" "Your majesty," replied she, "is, in truth, so actually Commander of the Faithful, that we, who are in fact your slaves, are all amazed to think what can make your majesty suppose you are not so?" "You lie," replied Abou Hassan; "I know very well what I am."

As the principal eunuch perceived that Abou Hassan meant to rise, he offered his hand to assist him in getting out of bed. As soon as he was upon his feet, the whole chamber resounded with the salutation which all the officers and ladies joined in giving at the same moment, with an acclamation in these words, "Commander of the Faithful, in the name of God, good morning to your majesty."

"Oh, Heavens!" then cried Abou Hassan, "what a miracle! last night was I Abou Hassan, and this morning I am Commander of the Faithful; I cannot at all understand this very sudden and surprising change." The officers whose business it was, speedily dressed him; when this was over, as the other officers, the eunuchs, and the females, had ranged themselves in two lines, quite to the door through which he was to go into the council-chamber, Mesrour led the way, and Abou Hassan followed. The arras was drawn back, and the door opened by an usher. Mesrour entered the council-chamber, and went on before him, quite to the foot of the throne, where he stopped to assist him in ascending it: this he did by lifting him under the shoulder on one side, while another officer, who followed, assisted him in the same way on the other.

Abou Hassan was seated amidst the acclamations of the attendants, who wished him all kind of happiness and prosperity; and looking to the right and left, he saw the officers of the guards ranged in exact order, and with a military appearance.

In the meantime the caliph, who quitted the closet in which he had been concealed, at the moment Abou Hassan entered the council-chamber, passed to another closet, which overlooked this chamber, and whence he could see and hear all that took place in the council when the grand vizier presided here instead of him, if at any time it was inconvenient for him to be there in person. What then pleased him the most was, to see Abou Hassan representing him upon the throne, and sitting with as much gravity as he could himself have shown.

From the moment Abou Hassan had taken his seat, the grand vizier, who was present, prostrated himself at the foot of the throne, and as he raised himself, thus addressed his person: "Commander of the Faithful, may God pour upon your majesty all the blessings of this life, and receive you into paradise in the next, and cast your enemies into the flames of hell!"

Abou Hassan, after all that had happened to him since he awoke, and what he had just heard from the mouth of the grand vizier, no longer doubted of his being the caliph, as he had wished to be. So without examining how, or by what means, so unexpected a change of fortune had taken place, he immediately began to exercise his power. Then looking at the grand vizier with gravity, he asked him whether he had anything to say to him.

"Commander of the Faithful," returned the grand vizier, "the emirs, the viziers, and the other officers who belong to your majesty's council, are at the door, and only wait the moment when you shall give them permission to enter and pay their accustomed respects." Abou Hassan immediately ordered it to be opened, and the grand vizier, turning round, said to the chief usher, who was in waiting for orders, "Chief usher, the Commander of the Faithful enjoins you to do your duty."

The door was opened, and at once the viziers, the emirs, and the principal officers of the court, all in their magnificent habits of ceremony, entered in exact order, came forward to the foot of the throne and paid their respects to Abou Hassan, each according to his rank, with their knees bent, and their face on the floor, just as they would in the presence of the caliph himself; and saluted him by the name of Commander of the Faithful, according to the instructions given by the grand vizier; they then took their places in turn, as soon as each had gone through this ceremony. When this was ended and they were all in their places, there was a profound silence.

Then the grand vizier, always standing before the throne, began to make his report of various matters in the order of the papers which he held in his hand. These, in truth, were matters of course, and of little consequence, nevertheless the caliph was in constant admiration of Abou Hassan's conduct. In fact, he never was at a loss, or appeared at all embarrassed. He gave just decisions upon what came before him, as his good sense suggested, whether he was to grant or refuse what was demanded of him.

Before the vizier had finished his report, Abou Hassan perceived the officer of the police, whom he knew by sight, sitting in his place. "Stay a moment," said he, interrupting the grand vizier, "I have an order of importance to give immediately to the officer of the police."

This officer, who had his eyes fixed upon Abou Hassan, and who perceived that he looked at him in particular, hearing his name mentioned, rose immediately from his place, and gravely approached the throne, at the foot of which he prostrated himself with his face towards the ground. "Officer," said Abou Hassan to him, when he had raised himself, "go this moment, without loss of time, into a street in a particular part of the town," both of which he named to him. "In this street is a mosque, where you will find the iman and four old greybeards; seize their persons, and let the four old men have each a hundred strokes on the feet, and let the iman have four hundred. After that, you shall cause all the five to be mounted, each on a camel, clothed in rags, and with their faces turned towards the tail. Thus equipped, you shall have them led through the different quarters of the town, preceded by a crier, who shall proclaim with a loud voice, 'This is the punishment for those who meddle with affairs which do not belong to them, and who make it their business to sow dissensions among their neighbours, and to do them all possible mischief.' My intention is, moreover, that you enjoin them to leave the part of the town in which they now live, and forbid them ever to set foot again in the place whence they were driven. While your deputy shall be conducting the procession I have just ordered, you must return to give me an account of the execution of my commands."

The officer of the police placed his hand upon his head, to signify that he

was going to execute the order he had received, under the penalty of losing it if he failed in any point. He prostrated himself a second time before the throne: then after being raised, went away.

This order, given with so much steadiness, gave the caliph the more satisfaction as he was now convinced that Abou Hassan was in earnest in wishing to punish the iman and his four old counsellors, and that that was the original motive for his wishing that he might have the caliph's power for a single day.

The grand vizier, in the mean time, went on with his report, and he had very nearly ended when the officer of the police, on his return, presented himself to give an account of his commission. He approached the throne, and after the usual ceremony of prostration, "Commander of the Faithful," said he to Abou Hassan, "I have found the iman and the four old men in the mosque, which your majesty pointed out; and to prove that I have duly executed the orders I received from your majesty, this is an account of the proceeding, signed by many principal people of that part of the town, who were witnesses." At the same time he took from his bosom a paper, and gave it to the pretended caliph.

Abou Hassan took the paper, read it throughout, even to the names of the witnesses, all of them people whom he knew; and when he had finished, "That is well done," said he to the officer of the police, smiling; "I am satisfied and pleased—resume your place. Hypocrites," said he to himself with an air of satisfaction, "who undertake to comment upon my actions, and think it wrong that I should receive and entertain respectable people at my house, richly deserve this disgrace and punishment." The caliph, who watched him, saw into his mind, and inconceivably enjoyed so pleasant a circumstance.

After that, Abou Hassan addressed the grand vizier: "Let the grand treasurer," said he, "make up a purse of a thousand pieces of gold, and go with it into a quarter of the city where I sent the officer of the police, and give it to the mother of one Abou Hassan, called the 'Rake.' The mar is well known throughout that quarter by that name; anybody will show you his house. Go; and return quickly.

The grand vizier Gafar put his hand on his head, to mark his readiness to obey; and after having prostrated himself before the throne, departed, and went to the grand treasurer, who gave him the purse. He ordered one of the slaves who attended him to take it, and proceeded to convey it to Abou Hassan's mother. He found her, and said, the caliph had sent this present, without explaining himself any further. She was much surprised at receiving it, as she could not conceive what should induce the caliph to make her so handsome a present, being ignorant of what was passing at the palace.

During the absence of the grand vizier, the officer of the police made a report of many things in his department, and this lasted until the vizier returned. As soon as he reached the council chamber, and had assured Abou Hassan that he had executed his commission, the chief of the eunuchs, that is, Mesrour, who had passed into the inner apartments of the palace, after he had conducted Abou Hassan to the throne, came back, and made a sign to the viziers, emirs, and all the officers, that the council was ended, and that every one might retire; which they did, after having taken their leave, by making a profound reverence at the foot of the throne, in the same order as they observed upon their entrance. There then remained with Abou Hassan only the officers of the caliph's guard, and the grand vizier.

Abou Hassan did not continue a long time on the throne of the caliph. He descended from it in the same manner he had mounted it, that is, by the assistance of Mesrour, and of another officer of the eunuchs, who took him by each arm, and waited upon him quite to the apartment in which he was at first. There he entered, preceded by the grand vizier. But scarcely had he taken a

few steps in it, before he expressed a wish to retire. While he was absent, the grand vizier went in search of the caliph, who had placed himself in another spot, that he might still be able to observe Abou Hassan, without being seen, and related to him all that had happened, with which the caliph was much delighted.

Abou Hassan returned, and Mesrour, walking before him to show him the way, led him into an inner room, where a table was set out. The door of the apartment was open, and a great many eunuchs ran to tell the female musicians, that the pretended caliph was coming. They immediately began a very harmonious concert of vocal and instrumental music, which delighted Abou Hassan to such a degree, that he felt himself in a transport of satisfaction and joy, and was quite at a loss what to think of all he saw and heard. "If it be a dream," said he to himself, "it is a dream of a long continuance. But it cannot be a dream," continued he; "I am perfectly sensible, I make use of my understanding, I see, I walk, I hear. Be it what it may, I refer myself to God in the whole business. Still, I cannot possibly believe that I am not the Commander of the Faithful; there is but one Commander of the Faithful who can be surrounded with so much magnificence as I am. The honours and respect which have been and still are paid to me, the orders I have given, and the manner in which they are executed, are clear proofs of it."

Abou Hassan was at last convinced that he was the caliph and the Commander of the Faithful; and he was fully persuaded of it, when he found himself in a very large and richly-furnished saloon. Gold, intermixed with the most vivid colours, shone on all sides. Seven bands of female musicians, all of the most exquisite beauty, were placed around this saloon. Seven golden lustres, with as many branches, hung from different parts of the ceiling, on which a skilful mixture of gold and azure had a wonderful effect. In the midst was a table spread with seven large dishes of massive gold, which perfumed the room with the odour of the richest spices used in seasoning the several delicacies. Seven young and most beautiful damsels, dressed in habits of the richest stuffs and most brilliant colours, stood round the table. Each held a fan in her hand in order to refresh him while he sat at table.

If ever mortal was delighted, it was Abou Hassan, when he entered this magnificent saloon. At every step he paused to look about him, and contemplate at his leisure all the wonderful things which were presented to his view. He was every moment turning himself from side to side, to the high delight of the caliph, who watched him with the utmost attention. At length he walked forward towards the middle of the room, and placed himself at the table. Immediately the seven beautiful damsels all at once agitated the air with their fans, to refresh the new caliph. He looked at them all in succession, and after admiring the graceful ease with which they performed their office, he said to them with a gracious smile, that he supposed one of them at a time was sufficient to give him all the air he wanted; and he chose that the other six should place themselves at the table with him, three on his right hand, and three on his left, and give him their company. The table was round, and Abou Hassan placed them in such a manner at it, that whichever way he looked, his eyes beheld only objects of the most pleasing and agreeable nature.

The six damsels obeyed, and placed themselves round the table. But Abou Hassan perceived that, out of respect to him, they did not eat; this induced him to help them himself, inviting and pressing them to eat in the most obliging manner. He desired to know their names, and each in turn satisfied his curiosity.

Their names were, Neck of Alabaster, Lip of Coral, Fair as Moonlight, Bright as Sunshine, Eye's Desire, Heart's Delight. He put the same question

to the seventh, who held the fan, and she answered that her name was Sugar Cane. The agreeable things he said to each of them on the subject of their names, showed that he had abundance of wit; and it cannot be conceived how much this raised him in the esteem which the caliph had already entertained for him, as he thus heard everything he said.

When the damsels saw that Abou Hassan had ceased eating: "The Commander of the Faithful," said one of them to the eunuchs who were in waiting, "is desirous to walk into the saloon where the dessert is prepared; let water be brought." They all rose from the table at the same time, and took from the hands of the eunuchs, one a golden bason, another a ewer of the same metal, the third a napkin, and presented themselves on their knees before Abou Hassan, who was still sitting, that he might have opportunity of washing himself. When he had washed he rose, and at the same moment a eunuch drew back the arras, and opened the door of another saloon, into which he was to go.

Mesrour, who had not quitted Hassan, walked before him, and conducted him into a saloon equally large with that he had left, but furnished with a variety of pictures by the best masters, ornamented in quite a different manner, with vases of both gold and silver, with carpets, and with other things of the most costly kind. There were in this saloon, too, seven other bands of female musicians, different from the former, and these seven bands, or rather, these seven choirs of music, began a new concert the moment Abou Hassan appeared. This saloon was furnished with seven other large lustres, and the table in the middle was covered with seven large golden basons, filled in form of pyramids with every sort of fruit in season, the finest, best chosen, and most exquisite; and round it were seven other young women, each with a fan in her hand, who were more beautiful than the first.

These new objects raised in Abou Hassan's mind a still greater admiration than before, and stopping to express it, he manifested the deepest sense of surprise and astonishment. At length he reached the table, and after he was seated at it, and had examined very leisurely the seven damsels, one after another, with a sort of embarrassment which showed he could not tell to which to give the preference, he ordered them all to lay by their fans, to sit down and eat with him, saying, that the heat was not so troublesome to him as to require their services.

When the damsels had taken their places on each side of Abou Hassan, he was first desirous of knowing their names, and he found that they had different names from those of the seven in the former saloon, but that these names also marked some excellence of mind or body, by which they were distinguished from each other. This extremely delighted him; as it appeared from the lively and appropriate speeches he used, when he offered to each, in turn, some fruit of the different sorts before him. To her that was called Heart's-chain, he said, "Eat this for my sake," giving her a fig, "and make the chains lighter, which I have worn from the moment I first saw you." And giving some grapes to Soul's-grief, "Take," said he, "these grapes, upon condition that you ease the grief I endure from the love with which you have inspired me." And in the same way he addressed the other damsels. And by circumstances of this sort, Abou Hassan made the caliph, who was much pleased with all he did and all he said, more and more delighted, at having found in him a man who could so agreeably amuse him, and at the same time furnish him with the means of knowing his character so thoroughly.

When Abou Hassan had eaten of those sorts of fruits on the table which he liked best, he rose; and immediately Mesrour, who never quitted him, again walked before him, and led him into a third saloon, furnished, decorated, and enriched in the same magnificent manner as the two former.

There Abou Hassan found seven other bands of music and seven other

damsels, waiting round a table set out with seven golden basons, containing liquid sweetmeats of various sorts and colours. After stopping to look at the multitude of fresh objects for admiration on all sides, he walked up to the table amidst the loud harmony of the seven bands of music, which ceased upon his being seated. These seven damsels also, at his command, took their places at the table with him. And as he could not dispense these liquids in the same manner and with the same polite attention he had done the rest, he begged they would themselves make choice of such as they liked best. He asked their names too, and he was not less pleased with these than with those of the former damsels; for their variety furnished him with new matter for conversing with them and addressing them with tender expressions, which gave them as much pleasure as it gave the caliph, who did not lose a word that he said.

The day was drawing towards a close, when Abou Hassan was led into a fourth saloon; it was decorated, like the rest, with the most costly and most magnificent furniture. Here, too, were seven grand lustres of gold, filled with lighted tapers; and the whole room was illuminated by a vast number of other lights, which had a novel and wonderful effect. Nothing was seen like this in the three others; indeed there was no occasion for it. Abou Hassan found again in this last saloon, as he had found in all the others, seven new bands of female musicians; these began a strain of a gayer cast than had been performed in the other saloons, and which seemed to excite a greater degree of joy. There too, he saw seven other damsels, who stood in waiting round a table, covered also with seven basons of gold, filled with cakes and pastry, with all sorts of dry sweetmeats, and whatever else was best fitted to occasion a desire for drinking. But Abou Hassan observed here what he had not seen in the other saloons,—a sideboard, upon which were seven large flagons of silver, filled with the most exquisite wines, and seven glasses of the finest rock crystal of excellent workmanship, near each of these flagons.

Hitherto, that is to say in the first three saloons, Abou Hassan had drunk only water, in compliance with the custom observed in Bagdad, as well by the common people as by the upper rank, and by the court of the caliph, where wine is usually only drunk at night. All those who make use of it at other times, are looked upon as dissipated persons, and they dare not appear in the daytime. This custom is the more to be commended, as during the day one has occasion for a clear head to transact business, and by that means, as wine is not taken till night, drunken people are never seen making disturbances in open day in the streets of that city.

Abou Hassan then entered this fourth saloon and walked up to the table. When he was seated, he remained a long time in a kind of ecstasy of admiration at the seven damsels who stood about him, and whom he thought still more handsome than those he had seen in the other saloons. He had great desire to know the name of each in particular. But as the loud sound of the music, and especially of the cymbals which were used in all the bands, did not allow his voice to be heard, he clapped his hands to put an end to it, when there was instantly a profound silence.

Taking then the hand of the damsel that was nearest him on the right, he made her sit down, and after presenting her with a rich cake, he asked her name. "Commander of the Faithful," answered the damsel, "I am called Cluster of Pearls." "You could not have a better name," returned Abou Hassan, "nor one more expressive of your charms. Not to blame those, however, who gave this name, I must think your beautiful teeth are beyond the finest-coloured pearls in the world. Cluster of Pearls," added he, "since that is your name, do me the favour to take a glass, fill it, and let me drink it from your fair hand."

The damsel went instantly to the sideboard, and came back with a glass of wine, which she presented to Abou Hassan with all the grace imaginable. He took it with pleasure, and looking at her tenderly, "Cluster of Pearls," said he, "I drink your health—I desire you would fill as much for yourself and pledge me." She quickly ran to the sideboard, and returned with a glass in her hand; but before she drank, she sung a song, which delighted him not less from its novelty, than from the charm of her voice, which was still more fascinating.

Abou Hassan, after having drunk, took from the basons what he liked best, and presented it to another damsel, whom he desired to come and sit near him. He demanded her name also. She answered, that her name was Morning Star. "Your fine eyes," resumed he, "are brighter and more brilliant than the star whose name you bear. Go, and do me the favour to fetch me a glass of wine;" this she did in a moment with the best grace possible. He did the same with regard to the third damsel, who was called Light of Day, as well as to all the rest, who each presented him with wine, which he drank, to the high delight of the caliph.

When Abou Hassan had drunk as many glasses as there were damsels, Cluster of Pearls, to whom he had first spoken, went to the sideboard, took a glass, which she filled with wine; after having thrown into it a little of the powder which the caliph had made use of the day before, she came to present it to him: "Commander of the Faithful," said she, "I entreat your majesty, by the concern I take in the preservation of your health, to take this glass of wine, and before you drink it, to hear a song, which I dare flatter myself will not be disagreeable to you. I composed it only this morning, and no one has yet heard me sing it." "I grant you this favour with pleasure," said Abou Hassan, as he took the glass which she presented to him; "and as Commander of the Faithful, I lay my injunctions upon you to sing, as I am persuaded that a person charming as you are, can say nothing but what is most agreeable and lively."

The damsel took her lute, and sung a song to the accompaniment of this instrument with so much accuracy, grace, and expression, that she kept Abou Hassan in an ecstasy from beginning to end. He thought it so charming, that he called for it a second time, and was no less pleased with it than before.

When she had finished, Abou Hassan, who was desirous of praising her as she deserved, first drank off the glass completely at a draught. Then turning his head towards the damsel, in order to speak to her, he was prevented by the sudden effect which the powder had taken, and could only open his mouth without uttering a single word distinctly. His eyes were presently closed; and letting his head fall quite upon the table, like a man thoroughly overcome with sleep, he continued in it as perfectly as he had done the day before from about the same time, when the caliph had made him take a little dose; and at the moment, one of the damsels near him was ready to catch the glass which he let fall from his hand. The caliph, who had derived a satisfaction from this amusement beyond his expectation, and who saw all that passed upon this occasion, as well as whatever Abou Hassan had done before, came out of his closet, and appeared in the saloon, quite delighted at having succeeded so well in his design. He first ordered that the caliph's habit, in which he had been dressed in the morning, should be taken from Abou Hassan, and that he should be clothed again with that which he had worn twenty hours before, at the time the slave who accompanied him had brought him to the palace. He ordered the same slave to be called, and upon his appearing, "Take charge again of this man," said he, "and carry him back to his own bed, and make no noise; and in coming away, be careful to leave the door open."

The slave took Abou Hassan, carried him off by the secret door of the palace,

placed him in his own house, as the caliph had ordered him, and returned with haste to give an account of what he had done. "Abou Hassan," said the caliph, then, "wished to be in my place for one day only, that he might punish the iman of the mosque in his neighbourhood, and the four scheiks, or old men, whose conduct had displeased him; I have procured him the means of doing what he wished, and on this point he ought to be satisfied."

Abou Hassan, being replaced on his sofa by the slave, slept till very late the next day; nor did he awake before the powder, which was put into the last glass he drank, had taken all its effect; then, upon opening his eyes, he was very much surprised to find himself at his own house. "Cluster of Pearls!" cried he, "Morning Star! Break of Day! Coral Lips! Moonshine!" calling the damsels of the palace, who had been sitting with him, each by their name, as he could recollect them, "Where are you? Come near me!"

Abou Hassan called as loud as he could. His mother, who heard him from her apartment, ran to him at the noise he made. "What's the matter with you, my son?" she asked. "What has befallen you?" At these words Abou Hassan raised his head, and looking at his mother with an air of haughtiness and disdain, "Good woman," asked he in his turn, "who is the person you call your son?" "It is yourself," replied the mother with much tenderness; "are not you my son, Abou Hassan? It would be the most extraordinary thing in the world if, in so short a time, you should have forgotten this." "I your son, execrable old woman!" returned Abou Hassan; "you know not what you are saying; you are a liar. I am not the Abou Hassan you speak of, I am the Commander of the Faithful."

"Be silent, my son," rejoined the mother; "you do not consider what you say; to hear you talk, one would take you for a madman." "You are yourself a mad old woman," replied Abou Hassan; "I am not out of my senses as you suppose; I tell you again I am Commander of the Faithful, and vicar upon earth of the Lord of both worlds." "Ah, my son!" cried the mother, "is it possible that I am now hearing you utter words, which clearly prove that you are not in your right mind. What evil genius possesses you to hold such a language. God's blessing be upon you, and may he deliver you from the malice of Satan! you are my son, Abou Hassan, and I am your mother."

After having given him all the proofs she could think of to convince him of his error, in order to bring him to himself: "Do you not see," she went on, "that the chamber you are now in is your own, and not the chamber of a palace, fit for the Commander of the Faithful; and that living constantly with me, you have never left it since you were born! Reflect upon all I have been saying to you, and do not take into your head things that neither are, nor can be, as you suppose; once more, my son, consider the matter seriously."

Abou Hassan heard, with composure, these remonstrances of his mother, and with his eyes cast down, and resting his head upon his hand, like a man who was recollecting himself, in order to examine into the truth of what he saw and heard: "I believe you are right," said he to his mother, a few moments after, as if he had been awakened from a deep sleep, but without altering his posture. "It seems," said he, "that I am Abou Hassan, that you are my mother, and that I am in my own chamber. Once more," added he, throwing his eyes around, and upon everything that came in his view, "I am Abou Hassan; I cannot doubt it, nor can I conceive how I could take this fancy into my head."

His mother thought in good earnest that her son was cured of the malady which disturbed his mind, and which she attributed to a dream. She was preparing to laugh with him, and questioned him about his dream, when on a sudden he sat up, and looking at her crossly, "Old witch, old sorceress," said

he, "thou knowest not what thou art saying; I am not thy son, nor art thou my mother. Thou deceivest thyself, and thou wishest to impose upon me. I tell thee, I am Commander of the Faithful, and thou shalt not make me believe otherwise." "For Heaven's sake, my son, put your trust in God, and refrain from holding this sort of language, lest some mischief befall you; let us talk rather of something else; allow me to tell you what happened yesterday to the iman of our mosque, and to the four scheiks of our neighbourhood. The officer of the police caused them to be apprehended; and after having given them each in turn, and in his presence, I know not how many strokes on the feet, he ordered it to be proclaimed by the crier that this was the punishment of those who meddled with affairs that did not concern them, and who made it their business to sow divisions among neighbouring families. Then he caused them to be led throughout all parts of the town, with the same declaration, and forbade them ever to set foot again in our neighbourhood."

Abou Hassan's mother, who could not imagine her son had any concern in the adventure she was relating, had purposely turned the conversation, and supposed that the narrative of this affair would be a likely mode of doing away the whimsical impression under which she saw him, of being the Commander of the Faithful.

But it turned out quite otherwise, and the recital of this story, far from effacing the notion which he now entertained, that he was the Commander of the Faithful, served only to recall it to his mind, and to impress still more deeply on his imagination that it was not deception, but a real fact. So that from the moment Abou Hassan heard this story, "I am no longer your son, nor Abou Hassan," resumed he. "I am assuredly the Commander of the Faithful, and it is not possible for me to have any further doubt, after what you yourself have just told me. Know, then, that it was by my orders that the iman and the four scheiks were punished in the manner you have told me. I am, then, I tell you in good truth, Commander of the Faithful; say therefore no longer that it is a dream—I am not now asleep, nor was I at the time I am telling you of. You afford me great satisfaction by confirming what the officer of the police, to whom I gave the orders, had already reported to me; that is to say, that my commands were punctually executed, and I am the more pleased because this iman and these four scheiks were consummate hypocrites. I should be glad to know who could bring me here. God be praised for everything. The truth is this, that I am most assuredly Commander of the Faithful, and all your reasoning will never persuade me to the contrary."

His mother, who could not guess nor even imagine why her son maintained with so much obstinacy and so much confidence that he was Commander of the Faithful, no longer doubted his having lost his understanding when she heard him say things which, in her mind, were so entirely beyond all belief, though in that of Abou Hassan they had good foundation. Under this persuasion, "My son," said she, "I pray God to pity and have mercy upon you. Cease, my son, from talking a language so utterly devoid of common sense. Look up to God, and entreat him to pardon you and give you grace to converse like a man in his senses. What would be said of you if you should be heard talking in this manner? Do you not know that walls have ears?"

These remonstrances, far from softening Abou Hassan's spirit, served only to irritate him still more. He inveighed against his mother with great violence: "Old woman," said he, "I have already cautioned thee to be quiet. If thou continuest to talk any longer, I will rise and treat thee in a manner thou wilt remember all the rest of thy life. I am the caliph, the Commander of the Faithful, and thou art bound to believe me when I tell thee so." The good lady then seeing that Abou Hassan was wandering still farther and farther from

his right mind, instead of returning to the subject, gave way to tears and lamentations; striking her face and bosom, she uttered exclamations, which testified her astonishment and deep sorrow at seeing her son under such a dreadful privation of understanding.

Abou Hassan, instead of being softened, and suffering himself to be affected by his mother's tears, on the contrary, forgot himself so far as to lose all sort of natural respect for her. He rose suddenly, and violently seizing a stick, he came towards her with his uplifted hand like a madman. "Cursed old woman," said he in his fury, and with a tone of voice sufficient to terrify any other than an affectionate mother, "tell me this moment who I am." "My son," answered his mother, looking most kindly at him, and far from being afraid, "I do not believe you so far abandoned by God as not to know the person who brought you into the world as well as who yourself are. I am honest in telling you that you are my son Abou Hassan, and that you are utterly wrong in taking upon yourself a title which belongs only to the caliph Haroun Alraschid, your sovereign lord and mine, at a time when this monarch has been heaping his benefits upon both you and me by the present he sent me yesterday. In fact, you are to know that the grand vizier Giafar took the trouble yesterday to find me out, and putting into my hands a purse of a thousand pieces of gold, bade me pray to God for the Commander of the Faithful who made this present, and does not this liberality concern you more than me who have but few days to live?"

At these last words, Abou Hassan lost all command over himself. The circumstances of the caliph's liberality which his mother had just related, assured him he did not deceive himself, and persuaded him more firmly than ever that he was the caliph, because the vizier carried the purse only by his own order. "Well! old sorceress!" cried he, "wilt thou not be convinced when I tell thee that I am the person who sent these thousand pieces of gold by my grand vizier Giafar, who did no more than execute the order which I gave him as Commander of the Faithful? Nevertheless, instead of believing me, thou art seeking to make me lose my senses by thy contradictions, maintaining with so much obstinacy that I am thy son. But I will not suffer thy wickedness to be long unpunished." Upon this, in the height of his frenzy, he was so unnatural as to beat her most unmercifully with the stick he held in his hand.

His poor mother, who had not supposed her son would so quickly put his threats into execution, finding herself beaten, began to cry out for help as loud as she could; and till the neighbours were assembled, Abou Hassan never ceased striking her, calling out at every stroke, "Am I the Commander of the Faithful?" To which the mother always affectionately returned, "You are my son."

Abou Hassan's rage began to abate a little when the neighbours came into his chamber. The first that appeared threw himself immediately between his mother and him, and after having snatched the stick from his hand: "What are you doing, Abou Hassan," said he; "have you lost the fear of God and your understanding? Never did a son of your condition in life dare to lift his hand against his mother? And are you not ashamed thus to ill-treat your mother, who so tenderly loves you?"

Abou Hassan, still quite outrageous, looked at the person who spoke without giving any answer. Then casting his wild eyes on each of those who also came in, he demanded, "Who is this Abou Hassan you are speaking of? Is it to me you give this name?" This question somewhat disconcerted the neighbours: "How!" replied he, who had just spoken, "do not you acknowledge this woman for the person that brought you up, and with whom we have always seen you living; in one word, do not you acknowledge her for your

mother?" "You are very impertinent," replied Abou Hassan, "I neither know her nor you, and I do not wish to know her. I am not Abou Hassan, I am the Commander of the Faithful; and if you are ignorant of it, I will make you know it to your cost."

At this speech the neighbours were all convinced that he had lost his senses. And to prevent his behaving in the same outrageous manner towards others as he had done towards his mother, they seized his person, and in spite of his resistance, bound him hand and foot and deprived him of the power of doing any mischief. In this situation, however, and apparently unable to hurt anybody, they did not think it right to leave him alone with his mother. Two of the company hastened immediately to the hospital for lunatics to inform the keeper what was passing. He came directly with some of the neighbours, followed by a considerable number of his people, who brought with them chains, handcuffs, and a whip made of thongs.

On their arrival, Abou Hassan, who did not in the least expect such formidable preparations, made great efforts to free himself; but the keeper, who was prepared to use his whip, soon brought him to order by two or three strokes well applied to his shoulders. This treatment had such effect upon Abou Hassan that he was quiet, and the keeper and his assistants did with him what they pleased. They chained him, and put handcuffs and fetters on him; and when they had done this, they brought him out of his house, and carried him to the hospital for lunatics.

Abou Hassan was no sooner in the street than he found himself surrounded by a great crowd of people. One gave him a blow with the fist, another a slap in the face, and others reproached him in the most abusive language, treating him as a fool and madman.

While he was suffering all this bad treatment, "There is no greatness and strength," said he, "but in the most high and Almighty God. It is determined that I am a madman although I am certainly in my senses; I bear these injuries, and suffer all this indignity, resigned to the will of God."

Abou Hassan was conveyed in this manner to the hospital appropriated to madmen. There he was lodged and shut up in an iron cage. But before he was confined, the keeper, hardened by repeated and terrible inflictions of this sort, treated his back and shoulders most unmercifully with fifty strokes of his whip, and continued for more than three weeks to give him every day the same number, always repeating these same words: "Recover your senses, and tell me whether you are still Commander of the Faithful." "I have no need of your correction," answered Abou Hassan: "I am no madman; but if I could become so, nothing would be so likely to bring upon me such a misfortune as the blows you give me."

Abou Hassan's mother in the mean time came constantly every day to see her son; and she could not refrain from tears when she observed him daily losing his flesh and strength, and heard his sighs and lamentations at the sufferings he endured. In fact, his shoulders, his back, and sides were black and bruised; nor could he procure any rest whichever way he turned himself. His skin came off more than once during his abode in this dreadful mansion. His mother was desirous of conversing with him, in order to console him, and to endeavour to make out whether he continued uniformly in the same turn of mind on the subject of his pretended dignity of caliph and Commander of the Faithful. But every time she opened her mouth to touch upon this point, he rejected what she said with such rage that she was forced to give him up and quit the subject, inconsolable at seeing him so obstinate in his opinion.

The strong and lively ideas which were impressed upon the mind of Abou Hassan, of having seen himself in the caliph's robes, of having actually dis-

charged the office, of having exerted his authority, of having been obeyed, and treated in all respects as the caliph, and which had persuaded him upon his awaking from sleep that he actually was so, and had made him persevere so long in his error, began now insensibly to wear out of his mind. "If I were caliph and Commander of the Faithful," said he sometimes to himself, "why should I have found myself after my sleep, at my own house, and dressed again in my own clothes? Why should not I have seen myself surrounded by the chief eunuch, the other eunuchs, and the very large assembly of damsels? Why should the grand vizier Giafar, whom I have seen at my feet, so many emirs, so many governors of provinces, and so many other officers, by whom I have seen myself surrounded, why should they all have quitted me? They would, a long time since, without a doubt, have delivered me from the wretched situation in which I am, if I still retained any authority over them. All this has been only a dream, and I ought to believe it so. I have ordered, it is true, an officer of the police to punish the iman, and the four old men his counsellors; and I have ordered the grand vizier Giafar to carry to my mother a thousand pieces of gold: and my orders were obeyed. This makes me hesitate, and I cannot comprehend it. But how many things else are there which I cannot comprehend, and never shall be able to understand. I refer all to God, who knows, and is thoroughly acquainted with everything."

Abou Hassan was still occupied with these thoughts and sentiments when his mother came in. She saw him so emaciated and so weak that she shed tears more abundantly than she had ever yet done. In the midst of her sobs she addressed him in the common way, and Abou Hassan returned her salutation in a way he had never done since his arrival at the hospital. "She thought it a good omen. 'Well, my son,' said she, wiping away her tears, 'how do you find yourself? In what state of mind are you? Have you given up all those fancies, and that language which the evil spirit suggested to you?' 'My dear mother,' answered Abou Hassan, with a settled and composed mind, and in a tone that marked the concern he felt for the violent manner in which he had behaved towards her; 'I acknowledge my error, and I entreat you to forgive the horrid crime of which I have been guilty towards you, and of which I sincerely repent. I make the same request to our neighbours for the offence which I have given them. I have been deceived by a dream, but by a dream so extraordinary, and so like a reality, that I would engage that any other person to whom it should happen would be not less affected with it than I was, and would fall into greater extravagances perhaps than you have seen me commit. I am still so much disturbed while I am speaking to you, that I have difficulty in persuading myself that what I have experienced is a dream, so much does it resemble what passes among those who are not asleep."

"Be this however as it may, I must allow it, and cannot but continue to think it a dream or an illusion. I am even convinced that I am not that phantom of a caliph and Commander of the Faithful, but your son Abou Hassan; that I am the son of you whom I have always honoured till that fatal day, the recollection of which covers me with confusion; you, whom I now honour, and ever will honour in a manner worthy of me, as long as I live."

At these words, so composed and so sensible, the tears of grief, of compassion, and distress, which Abou Hassan's mother had been shedding during so long a time, were changed into tears of pleasure, of comfort, and of tender affection for her dear son whom she had thus recovered: "My son," cried she, in a transport of joy, "I am not less delighted and happy to hear you talk so rationally after what has passed, than if I had just now brought you into the world a second time. I must tell you my opinion of your adventure,

and make you remark a circumstance to which, perhaps, you have paid no regard. The stranger whom you brought home to supper with you one night, went away without shutting your chamber-door as you desired him; and that, I believe, gave an opportunity to the evil spirit to come in and throw you into that dreadful illusion under which you have laboured. So, my son, you are bound to thank God for having given you this deliverance, and to entreat him to preserve you from again falling into the snares of this demon."

"You have discovered the source of my misfortune," answered Abou Hassan; "and it was on that very night that I had the dream which has so turned my head. I had, however, expressly cautioned the merchant to shut the door after him; and I now know that he did not do so. I am therefore, like you, persuaded that the devil found the door open, entered, and put all these imaginations into my head. At Moussoul, surely, whence this merchant came, they cannot be aware of what we are all well satisfied of at Bagdad, that the devil comes to occasion all those sad dreams which disturb our night's rest when the chambers where we sleep are left open. In the name of God, my mother, since, through His grace, I am perfectly restored to my senses, I entreat you as earnestly as it is possible for a son to entreat so good a mother as you are, to get me as soon as may be out of this place of torment, and deliver me from the hands of the executioner, who will infallibly shorten my days if I remain here any longer."

Abou Hassan's mother, perfectly comforted and much affected at seeing her son entirely recovered from the mad fancy of being caliph, went immediately to find the keeper who had brought him, and who had till then the management of him; and when she had assured him that he was perfectly restored to his reason, he came, examined him, and while she was present, released him.

Abou Hassan returned to his house, and remained there many days, in order to recover his health by better food than he had met with in the hospital for madmen. But as soon as he had a little regained his strength, and no longer felt the bad effects of the hard usage he had experienced during his confinement, he began to think it tiresome to pass his evenings without company. For this reason he soon returned to his usual way of life; that is to say, he began again to provide sufficiently every day to entertain a new guest at night.

The day on which he renewed his custom, of going, towards sunset, to the foot of the bridge at Bagdad, in order to stop the first stranger that should offer, and invite him to do him the honour of coming to sup at his house, was the first of the month, and the same day, as has been already mentioned, that the caliph amused himself with passing through one of the gates by which you enter the city, in disguise, that he might himself see whether anything was done contrary to the established police, in the same way he had fixed and determined from the beginning of his reign.

It was not a long time after Abou Hassan was come, and had taken his seat on a bench made against the parapet, that in casting his eyes towards the other end of the bridge, he saw the caliph coming towards him disguised as a merchant of Moussoul, as at first, and attended by the same slave. Persuaded that all the misery he had suffered arose only from the circumstance that the caliph, whom he thought to be only a merchant from Moussoul, had left the door open when he went out of his chamber, he trembled at the sight of him; "God preserve me!" said he to himself, "this, if I am not mistaken, is the very sorcerer who laid his spell upon me." He immediately turned his head and looked towards the stream of the river, leaning over the parapet, that he might not see him as he passed by.

The caliph, who wished to carry on still further the amusement he had derived from Abou Hassan, had taken great care to be informed of all that he

had said and done the day after he awoke and was carried back to his house, and of everything that had happened to him. He felt fresh pleasure at everything that was told him, and even at the ill treatment which he underwent at the hospital for madmen. But as this monarch was very just and generous, and as he discovered in Abou Hassan a turn of mind likely to afford him still further amusement, and as he also doubted whether, after having given up his assumed dignity of the caliph, he would return to his usual way of life, he thought fit, with the design of bringing him again near his person, to disguise himself, on the first day of the month, like a merchant of Moussoul, as he had done before, the better to effect his purpose with him. He perceived Abou Hassan, almost as soon as he was himself seen by him; and from his turning round, he found immediately how dissatisfied he was with him, and that he meant to avoid him. This induced him to walk on that side of the bridge where Abou Hassan was, and as near to him as possible. When he came up to him, he stooped down and looked in his face. "It is you, then, brother Abou Hassan," said he: "I salute you; suffer me, I beseech you, to embrace you."

"I, for my part," answered Abou Hassan, bluntly, without looking at the pretended merchant of Moussoul, "I am not desirous of saluting you; I want neither your salutation nor your embraces; go on your way." "What," resumed the caliph, "do not you know me? Do not you recollect the evening we passed together, a month ago this day, at your house, where you did me the honour to entertain me so hospitably?" "No," replied Abou Hassan, in the same tone of voice as before; "I know you not, nor can I guess what you are talking of; go, I repeat; go about your business."

The caliph did not resent Abou Hassan's rough answer. He knew that one of the rules Abou Hassan had laid down for himself was, to have no further acquaintance with a person whom he had once entertained; Abou Hassan had told him so, but he chose to pretend ignorance of it. "I cannot suppose that you must recollect me; it is not a great while since we saw each other, and it is scarcely possible that you should have so easily forgotten me. Surely some misfortune must have befallen you that creates in you this dislike to me. You must remember, nevertheless, that I showed my gratitude by my good wishes; and that upon one point, which you held near your heart, I made an offer of my services, which are not to be slighted." "I know not," replied Abou Hassan, "what may be your influence, nor am I desirous of putting it to the proof; this I know, that your wishes had only the effect of driving me mad. For God's sake, I say once again, go your way, and plague me no more."

"Ah, brother Abou Hassan," replied the caliph, embracing him, "I do not mean to part from you in this manner. Since I have been so fortunate as to meet with you a second time, you must show me again the same hospitality you did a month ago, and I must have the honour of drinking with you again." For that very reason Abou Hassan protested he would be upon his guard. "I have sufficient power over myself," added he, "to prevent my being found again with a man who carries mischief about him as you do. You know the proverb which says, 'Take up your drum and march;' apply it to yourself. Why should I repeat what I have so many times said? May God direct you: you have done me much harm, and I would not willingly expose myself to more."

"My good friend Abou Hassan," returned the caliph, embracing him once more, "you treat me with a harshness I did not expect. I beseech you not to hold so unpleasant a language with me, but to be on the contrary persuaded of my friendship. Do me the favour then to relate to me what has befallen you."

to me who have never wished you but well, who still wish you well, and who would be glad of an opportunity to do you any service in order to make amends for any misfortune you may have suffered through me, if indeed it has been by my fault." Abou Hassan gave way to the entreaty of the caliph; and, after having made him take a seat near him, "Your earnestness and your want of belief in me," said he, "have been beyond my patience; what I shall tell you, will let you know whether or no I complain of you without reason."

The caliph seated himself close to Abou Hassan, who gave him an account of all the adventures in which he had been engaged, from the time of his waking at the palace to that of his second waking at his own chamber; and he told everything as if it were really a dream, not omitting a multitude of circumstances which the caliph knew as well as he did himself, and which gave him fresh pleasure. He then dwelt with exaggeration on the impression which this dream had left upon his mind of his being caliph and Commander of the Faithful. "An impression," added he, "which led me into the wildest extravagances, so much so that my neighbours were obliged to bind me like a madman, and have me conveyed to the hospital for lunatics, where I was treated in a manner which must be called cruel, barbarous, and inhuman; but what will surprise you, and what without doubt you do not expect to be told, is, that whatever has befallen me has been through your fault. You must remember the earnest request I made you to shut the door of my chamber when you left me after supper. This you did not comply with; on the contrary, you left the door open, and the devil entered and filled my head with this dream, which, agreeable as it then appeared to me, has nevertheless occasioned all the evils of which I have so much reason to complain. You, then, are the cause of all by your negligence, which makes you responsible for the crime, the dreadful and horrid crime, which I have committed, not only of lifting my hand against my mother, but of being very near destroying her, and committing a parricide! and all this for a reason which makes me blush for shame whenever I think of it; because she called me her son, as in truth I am, and would not acknowledge me for Commander of the Faithful, as I believed myself to be, and which I actually maintained that I was. You, too, are the cause of that offence I gave my neighbours, when running to our house at the cries of my poor mother, they found me so exasperated against her as to attempt to lay her at my feet, which would not have happened if you had been careful to shut my chamber-door when you left me, as I had entreated you. They could not have come into my house without my permission, and what disturbs me most, they would not have been witnesses of my extravagances. I should not have thought it necessary to strike them in defending myself, and they would not have ill-treated me, and bound me hand and foot, that I might be conveyed to the lunatics' hospital, and shut up there, where, I can assure you, every day during my imprisonment in that infernal place, they never failed beating me most severely with a thong."

Abou Hassan related to the caliph these causes of complaint with much warmth and vehemence. The caliph knew better than he all that had passed, and he was delighted within himself at having succeeded so well, in having contrived to bring him into that state of illusion in which he still saw him; but he could not hear this narrative detailed in so artless a manner without bursting into a fit of laughter.

Abou Hassan, who thought his story would excite compassion, and that all the world must think so too, was highly offended at this violent laugh of the pretended merchant of Moussoul. "Are you bantering me," said he, "with thus laughing in my face, or do you think I am bantering you at the time I am talking to you very seriously? Do you wish for actual proof of what I advance?"

Here, look and see yourself, and tell me if I am bantering." As he said this, he bent himself forwards, and stripping bare his breast and shoulders, he let the caliph see the scars and bruises occasioned by the strokes of the thong he had received.

The caliph was shocked at the sight. He felt compassion for poor Abou Hassan, and was extremely sorry the jest had been carried so far. He ceased laughing, and cordially embracing Abou Hassan, "Rise, my dear brother, I beseech you," said he, with a very serious air; "come, let us go to your house, I wish to have again the pleasure of enjoying myself with you this evening; to-morrow, if it please God, all will turn out in the best way possible."

Abou Hassan, notwithstanding his resolution, and in opposition to the oath he had taken not to entertain a stranger a second time at his house, could not withstand the flattering instances of the caliph, whom he all along supposed to be a merchant from Moussoul. "Well, I consent," said he to the pretended merchant, "but it is upon a condition which you shall engage by an oath to observe. It is this: that you do me the favour to shut my chamber-door, when you leave my house, that the devil may not come to turn my brain as he did before." The pretended merchant gave his word. They both of them rose and walked towards the town. The caliph, the better to engage Abou Hassan, said to him, "Put confidence in me, and I promise you as a man of honour that I will not fail of my word. After this, you will not hesitate relying upon a person like me, who wishes you all sort of prosperity and happiness; and of this you shall soon experience the effects."

"I do not require this," rejoined Abou Hassan, suddenly stopping short. "I give way with all my heart to your importunity, but I dispense with your wishes, and I beg for God's sake that you will not entertain any for me. All the ills that have befallen me to the present time have no other source, when the door was left open, but those wishes of yours." "Well," replied the caliph, smiling within himself at the still disordered imagination of Abou Hassan, "since you will have it so, you shall be obliged. I promise to offer no more good wishes for you." "You give me pleasure to hear you say so," said Abou Hassan, "and I have nothing else to ask; and if you keep your word I will acquit you of everything else."

Abou Hassan and the caliph followed by his slave, conversing in this manner, insensibly drew near the appointed place; the day began to close when they reached Abou Hassan's house. He immediately called his mother, and ordered a light to be brought. He requested the caliph to take a place on the sofa, and he seated himself near him. In a short time supper was served on a table that was placed before them. They eat without ceremony. When they had finished, Abou Hassan's mother came to clear the table, placed the fruit upon it with the wine and glasses near her son; she then retired and appeared no more.

Abou Hassan began to help himself to wine first and then helped the caliph. They drank six or seven glasses each, talking of indifferent matters. When the caliph saw Abou Hassan beginning to grow warm, he led him to the subject of his amours, and he asked him if he had ever been in love.

"Brother," replied Abou Hassan, in a very familiar manner, thinking he was talking with his guest as one of his own rank, "I have never considered either love or marriage but as a slavery, to which I have always had a reluctance to submit; and to this moment, I will confess to you, I have never loved anything but the pleasures of the table, and especially good wine; in a word, to amuse myself and converse agreeably with my friends. I do not, however, tell you that I should be indifferent to marriage or incapable of attachment if I could meet with a woman of as much beauty and with the same agreeable

disposition as she had whom I saw in my dream on that fatal night when I received you here the first time, and when, to my misfortune, you left my chamber-door open; one, who would pass the evenings with me in drinking, who could sing and play on the lute, and converse agreeably with me, who should have no other view, in short, but to please and amuse me. On the contrary, I believe I should change all my indifference into the warmest attachment to such a person, and could live very happily with her. But where shall a man meet with such a woman as I have just been describing to you, except in the palace of the Commander of the Faithful, at the house of the grand vizier, or of those very powerful lords of the court with whom there is no want of silver and gold to purchase such a one? I would rather, therefore, confine myself to my bottle, which is a pleasure I have at little expense, and is common with them." As he said this, he took a glass and filled it with wine. "Do you take a glass also, which I will fill for you," said he to the caliph, "and let us prolong the enjoyment of this charming pleasure."

When the caliph and Abou Hassan had drunk, "'Tis a great pity," returned the caliph, "that so gallant a man as you are, and who are not indifferent to love, should lead such a retired and solitary life." "I find no difficulty," replied Abou Hassan, "in preferring the composed kind of life you see me leading, to the company of a woman who, perhaps, in respect of beauty, might not hit my taste, and who besides, might plague me in a thousand ways by her defects and her ill temper."

They pushed their conversation on this subject to a great length; and the caliph, who saw Abou Hassan quite up to the point he wished, then said; "Leave the matter to me, and since you have a good taste and are a honest fellow, I will find a person to your mind, without its being either cost or trouble to you." At this moment he took the bottle and Abou Hassan's glass, into which he dexterously put a small quantity of the powder he had made use of before, filling him a bumper, and presenting the glass to him, "Take," continued he, "and drink beforehand to the health of the beauty, who is to make the happiness of your life; depend upon it you shall be pleased."

Abou Hassan took the glass with a smile, and shaking his head, "Happy be the event," said he, "since you will have it so; I cannot bear to be guilty of an incivility toward you, nor disoblige a guest so good as you are, for a thing of so little importance; I will, then, drink to the health of this beauty you promise me, although, contented with my present situation, I build but little upon it."

Abou Hassan had no sooner swallowed his bumper, than a deep sleep deprived him of his senses, as it had done twice before, and the caliph was again enabled to do with him as he pleased. He immediately ordered the slave that attended him to take Abou Hassan and convey him to the palace. The slave carried him off; and the caliph, who had no design of sending Abou Hassan back as before, shut the chamber-door when he left it.

The slave followed with his burden, and when the caliph reached the palace, he ordered Abou Hassan to be laid on a sofa in the fourth saloon, whence he had been carried back to his own house, fast asleep, on the former occasion. Before they left him to finish his sleep, he ordered the same dress to be put upon him which he had already worn at his command, to make him support the character of the caliph; this was done in his presence. Then he bade them all go to bed, and ordered the chief, and all the eunuchs, the officers of the bed-chamber, the female musicians, and the same damsels who were in this saloon when he had drunk the last glass of wine which brought on his sleep, to be ready without fail the next day at sunrise, when he should awake, and charged each of them to play their part exactly.

The caliph went to bed, after having told Mesrour to come and inform him, before they went into the closet, where he had been always concealed.

Mesrour did not fail to wake the caliph exactly at the appointed hour : he immediately dressed and went out towards the chamber where Abou Hassan was still asleep. He found the officers of the eunuchs, those of the bedchamber, the damsels, and the female band of music at the door, waiting his arrival. He told them in a few words what his intention was, then he went in, and proceeded to place himself in the closet enclosed with lattices. Mesrour, all the other officers, the damsels, and the female band of music, came in after him, and stood round the sofa on which Abou Hassan was sleeping, in such a way as not to prevent the caliph from seeing and observing whatever he should do.

When everything was thus arranged, and the caliph's powder had taken all its effect, Abou Hassan awoke, but without opening his eyes, and spat out a little phlegm, which was caught in a bason of gold, as formerly. At this moment the seven choirs of female singers mixed their delightful voices with the sound of hautboys, soft flutes, and other instruments, so as to make a most agreeable concert.

Abou Hassan was very much astonished when he heard such sweet harmony, he opened his eyes, and his astonishment increased beyond measure when he perceived the damsels and the officers who stood round him, and whom he thought he recollected. The saloon where he found himself seemed the same as that which he had seen in his first dream ; he observed there the same lights, the same furniture, and the same ornaments.

The concert ceased, in order to give the caliph an opportunity of observing the countenance of his new guest, and hearing all he should say in his astonishment. The damsels, Mesrour, and all the officers of the bedchamber, keeping a profound silence, remained each in their place, with every mark of respect. " Alas ! " cried Abou Hassan, biting his fingers, and in a voice so loud that the caliph was delighted to hear him ; " here am I again fallen into the same dream, and the same illusion which I experienced a month ago : and what have I to expect but the same strokes of the thong, the hospital for madmen, and the iron cage ? Almighty God ! I resign myself into the hands of thy divine providence. He whom I received yesterday evening at my house is a most wicked fellow to cause me this illusion, and all the misery I shall suffer in consequence of it. Perfidious traitor, he had promised with an oath, that he would shut my chamber-door after him when he left my house ; but he has not done so, and the evil spirit has entered, and now is again turning my brain with this cursed dream of Commander of the Faithful, and with so many other fancies by which he fascinates my eyes. May God confound thee, Satan, and heap a mountain of stones over thy head ! "

After these last words, Abou Hassan shut his eyes, and remained wrapped in deep thought, with a mind thoroughly confused. A moment after he opened them, and looking by turns on all the objects presented to his view : " Great God ! " cried he again, but with rather less astonishment, and with a smile, " I resign myself into the hands of thy providence : preserve me from the temptation of Satan. " Then closing his eyes again, " I know what I will do, " continued he : " I will sleep till Satan leaves me, and is gone back to the place whence he came, though I should stay till noon. "

They did not give him time to sleep again as he proposed. Heart's Delight, one of the damsels whom he had seen the first time, came up to him, and seating herself at the end of the sofa, " Commander of the Faithful " said she, in a very respectful manner, " I beseech your majesty to pardon me, if I take the liberty of advising you not to sleep again, but to endeavour to rouse yourself

and get up, because the day is beginning to appear." "Get thee from me, Satan," said Abou Hassan, when he heard this voice; then looking up at Heart's Delight, "Do you call me Commander of the Faithful?" said he: "You certainly take me for another person."

"It is your majesty," resumed Heart's Delight, "that I give this title, which belongs to you as sovereign of all the Musselman world, whose most humble slave I am, and to whom I have now the honour of speaking. Your majesty chooses, without doubt, to amuse yourself," added she, "in pretending to forget yourself, unless perhaps it be owing to the remains of some unpleasant dream; but if your majesty will be pleased to open your eyes, the cloud which perhaps hangs over your imagination will be dissipated, and you will see that you are in your palace, surrounded by your officers and by us, the humblest of your slaves, ready to render you our accustomed services. Nor ought your majesty to be surprised at seeing yourself in this saloon, and not in your bed; you yesterday fell asleep so suddenly that we were unwilling to wake you, in order to conduct you to your bedchamber, and we satisfied ourselves with placing you so as to sleep commodiously on this sofa."

Heart's Delight said so many other things to Abou Hassan, which appeared probable to him, that at length he rose and sat up. He opened his eyes, and knew her again, as well as Cluster of Pearls, and the other damsels whom he had seen before. Then they all came near him at once, and Heart's Delight resumed her discourse: "Commander of the Faithful, and vicar of the prophet upon earth," said she, "your majesty will allow us to remind you again that it is time to rise; you see it is daylight."

"You are very troublesome and impertinent," resumed Abou Hassan, rubbing his eyes; "I am not Commander of the Faithful, I am Abou Hassan, I very well know; and you shall not persuade me to the contrary." "We know nothing of Abou Hassan, of whom your majesty speaks," replied Heart's Delight; "we have no desire to know him; we know your majesty to be Commander of the Faithful, and you will never persuade us that you are not so."

Abou Hassan cast his eyes around him, and felt as it were under enchantment at seeing himself in the same saloon in which he knew he had been before; but he attributed all this to a dream, like that he had already experienced, and of which he dreaded the sad consequences. "God have mercy upon me," cried he, lifting up his hands and eyes like a person who knew not where he was; "into His hands I resign myself. From what I now see I cannot doubt but the devil, who entered my chamber, besets and disturbs my imagination with all these visions." The caliph, who was observing him, and had just heard all his exclamations, felt himself inclined to laugh so heartily that he had some difficulty to prevent discovering himself.

Abou Hassan was, however, now lying down, and had shut his eyes again. "Commander of the Faithful," immediately said Heart's Delight, "since your majesty does not rise after being told it is daylight, as we are bound to do, and that it is necessary your majesty should pay attention to the business of the empire, which is entrusted to your government, we shall make use of the permission you have given us on such occasions." At the same time she took him by one arm, and called the other damsels to assist her in making him rise from the place where he was laid; and they carried him, almost by force, into the midst of the saloon, where they placed him on a seat. Then they took each other by the hand, and danced and skipped about him to the sound of the cymbals, and all the other instruments, which they played about his head as loud as possible.

Abou Hassan found himself perplexed beyond expression: "Can I be really

caliph and Commander of the Faithful!" said he to himself. At last, uncertain what to think, he was desirous of speaking out, but the loud sounds of the instruments prevented his being heard. He beckoned to Cluster of Pearls and Morning Star, who danced about him, holding each other by the hand, and signified that he wished to speak. Immediately she put a stop to the dance and the sound of the instruments, and came near him. "Don't tell fibs," said he, with great simplicity; "tell me truly who I am."

"Commander of the Faithful," answered Morning Star, "your majesty chooses to surprise us by putting this question, as if you did not yourself know that you are Commander of the Faithful, and the vicar upon earth of the prophet of God, who is Lord both of this and the other world: of that in which we now are, and of that which is to come after death. If this were not the case, some extraordinary dream must have made your majesty forget who you are. It may well be something of this sort, if it is considered that your majesty has slept to-night a much longer time than usual: nevertheless, if your majesty gives permission, I will bring to your recollection everything you did yesterday through the whole day. She then related to him his coming into the council, the punishment of the iman and the four old men by the officer of the police; the present of a purse of gold sent by his vizier to the mother of a person called Abou Hassan; what was done in the interior of the palace, and what passed at the three tables of refreshment, which were served in the three saloons, even in the last, "where your majesty," continued she, addressing herself to him, "after having made us sit near you at the table, did us the honour of hearing our songs, and taking wine from our hands, till the moment when your majesty fell fast asleep in the manner just related by Heart's Delight. Since then, your majesty, contrary to your usual habit, has been constantly in a deep sleep, quite to the beginning of this day. Cluster of Pearls, all the rest of the slaves, and all the officers present, will prove the same thing, so that your majesty will prepare to go to prayers, for it is now time."

"Well, well," returned Abou Hassan, shaking his head, "you would fain impose upon me, if I would hearken to you. For my part," he went on, "I say, you are all mad, and have all lost your senses. 'Tis a great pity, however, since you are all so handsome. But know, that since I saw you, I have been at my own house, have treated my mother very ill, have been thrown into the lunatics' hospital, where I remained, much against my will, more than three weeks, during which time the keeper never failed to treat me every day with fifty strokes of the thong; and would you have all this to be nothing but a dream? Surely you are jesting." "Commander of the Faithful," replied Morning Star, "we are all ready, all that are present, to swear by whatever your majesty holds most dear, that what you tell us is only a dream. You have not left this room since yesterday, and you have not ceased sleeping the whole night till this moment."

The confidence with which this damsel assured Abou Hassan that all she said was true, and that he had not left the saloon since he first entered it, reduced him once more to the situation of not knowing what to believe—either who he was, or what he saw. He remained some time quite lost in thought. "O Heaven!" said he to himself, "am I Abou Hassan? Am I Commander of the Faithful? God Almighty, enlighten my understanding! Cause me to distinguish the truth, that I may know on what to depend." He then uncovered his shoulders, still all black with the strokes he had received, and showing them to the damsels, "See," said he, "and judge whether such wounds could come from a dream when one is sleeping. I can assure you, I think them real; and the pain I still feel from them is so sure a proof, that I can have no doubt. If, nevertheless, all this has befallen me in my sleep, it is the most extraordinary

and the most astonishing thing in the world ; I must confess, it passes my comprehension."

In the uncertain state of Abou Hassan's mind, he called one of the officers, who was near him : "Come hither," said he, "and bite the tip of my ear, that I may determine whether I am asleep or awake." The officer came near, took the top of his ear between his teeth, and bit it so hard, that Abou Hassan set up a dreadful cry.

At this cry all the instruments played at the same time, and the damsels and the officers began to dance, to sing, and skip about Abou Hassan with so much noise, that he fell into a sort of frenzy, which made him do a thousand silly things. He began to sing with the rest. He stripped off the fine dress of the caliph, which they had put upon him. He threw upon the floor the cap he had on his head ; and with only his shirt and drawers on, he readily sprang off his seat, and threw himself between the two damsels, whom he took by the hand, and began to skip and dance with them so actively, so violently, and with so many droll and ridiculous twistings of his body, that the caliph could no longer restrain himself in his hiding-place. This sudden fit of merriment of Abou Hassan made him laugh so violently that he fell backwards, and was heard above all the noise of the musical instruments and cymbals. He was so long a time unable to contain himself, that he was in danger of suffering from the struggle. At length he rose up, and opened the lattice. Then putting out his hand, still continually laughing : "Abou Hassan, Abou Hassan," cried he, "are you determined to make me die with laughing ?"

When the caliph spoke, everybody was silent, and the loud music ceased. Abou Hassan was quiet with the rest, and turned his head towards the place whence he voice came. He recollected the caliph, and, at the same time, the merchant of Moussoul. He was not disconcerted at this ; he knew in a moment that he was quite awake, and that all which had befallen him was perfectly real, and no dream. He fell in with the humour and the design of the caliph : "Ah, ah !" cried he, looking at him with an air of confidence, "you are there, merchant of Moussoul ! what, then, do you complain that I make you die with laughing ; you, that are the cause of the ill-treatment I showed my mother, and of all I myself received during my long confinement in the hospital for lunatics ; you, who have so ill-treated the iman of the mosque in our part of the town, and the four scheiks my neighbours—for I had nothing to do with it—I wash my hands of it ; you, who have occasioned so much distress, and so many cross accidents ? In short, are not you the aggressor, and am not I the sufferer ?" "You are in the right, Abou Hassan," replied the caliph, still continuing to laugh ; "but for your comfort, and to make amends for all your sufferings, I am ready, and I call God to witness it, to recompense you in any way you wish, and shall think proper to demand."

As soon as he had said this, the caliph came down from his closet, and entered the saloon. He ordered one of his best habits to be brought, and bade the damsels and the officers of the chamber employ themselves, according to their duty, in dressing Abou Hassan with it. When they had done so, "You are my brother," said the caliph, embracing him ; "ask of me whatever shall be most satisfactory to you, and I will grant it." "Commander of the Faithful," replied Abou Hassan, "I beseech your majesty to have the goodness to inform me what you did to turn my brain, and what was your design in so doing ; at present this is of more importance to me than anything else, to bring my mind back again to its former state."

The caliph was ready to give Abou Hassan this satisfaction. "You must, in the first place, know then," said he, "that I disguise myself very often, and especially by night, to make myself acquainted whether proper order be pre-

served in all respects in the city of Bagdad ; and as I am also glad to know what is passing in its neighbourhood, I fix a certain day, which is the first of every month, to make a large circuit beyond the walls, sometimes on one side, sometimes on the other ; and I always return by the bridge. I was returning from the circuit the evening you invited me to sup with you. In the course of our conversation you observed, that the chief thing you desired was, to be caliph and Commander of the Faithful only during the space of twenty-four hours, to punish the iman of the mosque of your neighbourhood, and the four scheiks his counsellors. Your desire appeared to me a circumstance from which I might derive great amusement, and with that view, I at once thought of the means of procuring you the satisfaction you were desirous of. I had about me a powder, which brings on a deep sleep the moment it is taken, and from which a person does not awake during a certain time. Without your perceiving it, I put a dose of it into the last glass which I presented to you, and you swallowed it. You were immediately seized with a sleepy fit, and I ordered you to be taken away and carried to my palace by the slave attending upon me ; and when I went away, I left your chamber-door open. I need not tell you what happened to you at my palace after your waking, and during the whole of that day till night, when, after having been well entertained, by my order one of my female slaves, who waited upon you, put another dose of the same powder into the last glass which was presented to you, and which you drank. A sound sleep immediately seized you, and I ordered you to be carried back to your own house by the same slave who had brought you, with an order to leave again the chamber-door open when he came out of it. You have yourself told me all that befell you on the next and following days. I did not imagine you would have to undergo so much as you suffered on this occasion : but as I have given you my word, I will do everything to console you, and what shall make you forget, if possible, all your sufferings. See, then, what I can do for your satisfaction : and freely ask me to give you whatever you wish."

"Commander of the Faithful," returned Abou Hassan, "great as have been the evils I have suffered, they are effaced from my memory the moment I know they were occasioned by my sovereign lord and master. With regard to the generosity with which your majesty offers to make me feel the effects of so much goodness, I can have no doubt, after your irrevocable word has passed ; but as self-interest had never much power over me, since your majesty gives me this liberty, the favour I shall presume to ask is to allow me free access to your person, that I may have the happiness all my life of admiring your greatness."

This last proof of Abou Hassan's disinterestedness completely gained the caliph's esteem. "I most readily comply with your request," said he, "and at the same time grant you free access to me in my palace at all hours, and in whatever part I may be : " and he immediately assigned him an apartment in the palace. As to his appointments, he chose rather that he should be about his person than have any particular office in his treasury, and upon the spot ordered a thousand pieces of gold to be paid him from the privy purse. Abou Hassan made the humblest acknowledgments to the caliph, who then left him, in order to hold a council as usual.

Abou Hassan took this opportunity of going immediately to his mother, to inform her of all that had passed, and to acquaint her with his good fortune. He made her understand that all which had befallen him was by no means a dream ; that he had been caliph, that he had actually discharged all the functions, and really received all the honours paid to the caliph, during the space of twenty-four hours ; and that she need not doubt of what he was telling her, since he had it confirmed to him by the caliph's own mouth.

The news of Abou Hassan's story was soon spread throughout the city of

Bagdad : it passed even into the neighbouring provinces, and thence into the most distant, and all the singular and amusing circumstances with which it was attended.

This newly-acquired distinction of Abou Hassan rendered him extremely attentive about the caliph's person. As he was naturally of a good temper, and occasioned much cheerfulness wherever he came by his wit and pleasantry, the caliph scarcely knew how to do without him ; and he never engaged in any scheme of amusement but he made him of the party. He sometimes introduced him even to his wife Zobeidè, to whom he had related his history, which entertained her much. Zobeidè was very well pleased with him ; but she observed, that whenever he attended the caliph in his visits to her, he had always his eye upon one of her slaves, called Nouzhatoul Aouadat. This she determined, therefore, to communicate to the caliph. "Commander of the Faithful," said the princess one day to him, "you do not observe perhaps as I do, that every time Abou Hassan comes hither with you, he constantly fixes his eye upon Nouzhatoul Aouadat, and that he never fails to make her blush. You will hardly doubt that this is a sure sign she does not dislike him. If, therefore, you will take my advice, we will contrive a marriage between them." "Madaun," returned the caliph, "you bring to my recollection a thing I ought not to have forgotten. I know Abou Hassan's opinion on the subject of marriage from himself, and I have always promised to give him a wife with whom he shall have every reason to be satisfied. I am glad you have spoken to me about it, and I cannot conceive how the thing could have escaped my memory. But it is better that Abou Hassan should follow his own inclination in the choice he is to make for himself. Besides, since Nouzhatoul Aouadat does not seem averse to the match, we should not hesitate about this marriage. Here they are both, they have nothing to do but to declare their consent."

Abou Hassan threw himself at the feet of the caliph and Zobeidè, to testify how sensible he was of their kindness towards him. "I cannot," said he, as he rose, "receive a bride from better hands ; but I dare not hope that Nouzhatoul Aouadat will give me her hand so cordially as I am ready to give her mine." Upon saying this, he looked at the slave of the princess, who, on her part, by a respectful silence, and by the colour which rose into her cheeks, plainly discovered that she was entirely disposed to follow the inclination of the caliph, and of Zobeidè, her mistress.

The marriage took place, and the nuptials were celebrated in the palace with great demonstrations of joy, which lasted many days. Zobeidè considered it a point of honour to make her slave rich presents, to please the caliph ; and the caliph on his part, out of regard for Zobeidè, was equally generous towards Abou Hassan.

The bride was conducted to the apartments which the caliph had assigned to Abou Hassan, her husband, who expected her with impatience. He received her to the sound of all sorts of musical instruments, mixed with the voices of singers of both sexes, belonging to the palace, which sounded with this loud and harmonious concert.

Many days passed in the festivities and rejoicings usual upon such occasions, when at length the new-married pair were left to enjoy themselves. Abou Hassan and his new wife were charmed with each other. They were so perfectly united in affection, that, except the time they employed in paying attendance, one on the caliph, and the other on the princess Zobeidè, they lived entirely together. It is true that Nouzhatoul Aouadat had all the qualities of a wife capable of inspiring Abou Hassan with love, for she corresponded to those wishes he had expressed so plainly to the caliph. With such dispositions they could not fail of passing their time together most agreeably. Their table

was constantly covered at every meal with the most delicious and high-seasoned dishes that cooks, with the utmost care, could prepare and furnish. Their sideboard was always full of the most exquisite wine, which was so disposed, as to be conveniently within the reach of either as they sat at table. There they enjoyed themselves most agreeably in private, and entertained each other with a thousand pleasantries, which made them laugh more or less, according to the degree of their wit and humour. Their evening repast was more peculiarly devoted to pleasure. At that time were served only the best sorts of fruits, almond-cakes, and the most exquisite confectionery. At every glass they drank their spirits were raised by some new songs which were often composed at the moment, and suggested by the subject of their conversation. These songs were sometimes accompanied by a lute, or some other instrument on which both of them were able to perform.

Abou Hassan and Nouzhatoul Aouadat passed a long time in the enjoyment of this mirth and good cheer. They took no thought about the expense of their way of living. The cook whom they had chosen had hitherto furnished everything without making his demand. It was but right that he should receive some money; he therefore presented his account to them. The amount was found to be very considerable. There was, besides, a demand made for bridal garments of the richest stuffs for the use of both, and for jewels of high value for the bride; and so very large was the sum, that they perceived but too late, that of all the money they had received from the liberality of the caliph and the princess Zobeide when they were married, there remained no more than was sufficient to discharge the debt. This made them reflect seriously on their past conduct, but their reflections could not remedy the present evil. Abou Hassan was inclined to pay the cook, and his wife had no objection. They sent for him, and paid him his demand, without showing the least sign of the embarrassment they must immediately find themselves in upon payment of this money.

The cook went away quite rejoiced at being paid in so new and very excellent coin: for none of an inferior sort was ever seen at the caliph's palace. Abou Hassan and Nouzhatoul Aouadat had thought they should never see an empty purse. They remained in profound silence, with downcast eyes, and much confounded at finding themselves reduced to such a situation the very first year after their marriage.

Abou Hassan well remembered that the caliph, on receiving him at his palace, promised him that he should never want for anything. But when he reflected that he had squandered, in a little time, the liberal bounty he had received, besides feeling in no disposition to make a request, he could not bear to expose himself to the shame of avowing to the caliph the ill use he had made of it, and the necessity he was under of receiving a fresh supply. He had, besides, given up all his own property to his mother, as the caliph had retained him near his person: and he was very unwilling to have recourse to her for assistance, as she would know, from such a step, that he was fallen again into the same state of distress as he was in soon after the death of his father.

Nouzhatoul Aouadat, on her part, who regarded the generosity of Zobeide, and the liberty she had given her of marrying, as more than a sufficient recompense for her services and attachment, did not think she had any claim to request further favours.

At last Abou Hassan broke silence; and looking at Nouzhatoul Aouadat with an open countenance: "I plainly see," said he, "that you are in the same embarrassment with myself, and that you are considering what we are to do in a situation so deplorable as ours, when our money fails us all at once, before we had made provision for such distress. I know not what you may think of the

matter ; for my part, whatever may be the consequence, I am determined not to retrench, in the smallest instance, my usual expenses, and I believe you are not disposed to give up yours. The point is, to find means to provide for them, without our having the meanness to apply either to the caliph or Zobeïdè ; and I think I have made a discovery. But in this matter we must resolve to assist each other."

This speech of Abou Hassan gave Nouzhatoul much satisfaction, and some degree of hope. "I was not less engaged than you with this thought," said she ; "and if I did not speak out, it was because I could see no remedy. I must confess that the declaration you have just made, gives me the greatest satisfaction possible. But since you have discovered the means as you say, and that my assistance is necessary to our success, you have only to tell me what I am to do, and you shall see that I will exert myself to the utmost." "I felt assured," replied Abou Hassan, "that you would not fail in a matter which concerns you equally with myself. This, then, is the scheme I have devised, to procure money in our necessity, at least for some time to come. It consists in a little piece of deceit, which we must practise towards the caliph and Zobeïdè, and which, I am assured, will cause them amusement, and not be unprofitable to us. The deceit which I propose is, that we should both of us die."

"That we should both of us die !" said Nouzhatoul Aouadat abruptly. "You may die if you please ; but for my part, I am not yet tired of life, and not to give you offence, I have no intention of dying quite so soon. If you have no better scheme to propose than this, you may execute it yourself, for I can assure you I will have nothing to do with it." "You are a woman," replied Abou Hassan ; "I mean you are surprisingly ready and quick : you give me no time to explain myself. Hear me, then, a moment patiently, and you shall find that you will have no objection to dying in the way I mean to die. You will understand that I do not mean to talk of a real, but a feigned death."

"Ah ! good !" said Nouzhatoul Aouadat, with quickness, "since our concern is only with a feigned death, I am at your service : you may depend upon me ; you shall see with what zeal I will second you in this sort of death ; for to tell you freely, I have a most unconquerable aversion to the thoughts of dying so soon in the way I first understood you." "Very well," said Abou Hassan, "you may be satisfied this is what I mean ; in order to succeed in my scheme, I am going to play the dead man. You shall immediately take a sheet, and you shall put me in a coffin as if I were actually dead. You shall place me in the middle of the chamber in the usual way, with a turban on my face, and my feet turned toward Mecca, with every preparation made for carrying me to the grave. When all this shall be done, you shall set up a cry and shed tears, as is usual upon such occasions, rending your garments, and tearing your hair, and in this state of lamentation, and with dishevelled locks, you shall go and present yourself to Zobeïdè. The princess will wish to know the reason of your tears ; and when she shall be informed by you in language much interrupted by sobs, she will not fail to pity you, and make you a present of a sum of money to assist you in defraying the expenses of my funeral, and to purchase a piece of brocade to serve for a pall, in order to give a splendour to my interment, as well as to purchase a new dress for yourself in the room of that which she will see you have torn. As soon as you shall have returned with this money, and this piece of brocade, I will rise from the place where I have been lying, and you shall take it instead of me. You shall pretend to be dead, and after you have been put into a coffin, I will go in my turn to the caliph, and play the same part you shall have done with Zobeïdè ; and I dare promise myself that the caliph will not be less liberal to me than Zobeïdè will have been to you."

When Abou Hassan had sufficiently explained himself on his intended project, "I believe," said Nouzhatoul Aouadat immediately, "that the trick will be very amusing; and I am mistaken if the caliph and Zobeidè will not think themselves much obliged to us for it. The business now is to manage it properly: let me alone for the part I am concerned in, that shall be well performed—at least, as well as I suppose you will perform yours, and we shall both act with zeal and attention in proportion as we both expect to derive benefit from it. Let us lose no time. Whilst I am getting a sheet, do you put on your shirt and drawers; I know what belongs to funerals as well as anybody; for whilst I was in the service of Zobeidè, if any slave died among my companions, I was always appointed to superintend the burial."

Abou Hassan was not long in doing what Nouzhatoul Aouadat recommended. He lay down on his back on the sheet which had been spread upon the carpet in the middle of the chamber, crossed his arms, and suffered himself to be wrapped up in a manner which seemed as if nothing more was necessary but to place him on the bier, and to carry him out to be buried. His wife turned his feet towards Mecca, covered his face with the finest muslin, then placed his turban over it in such a manner as not to prevent his breathing. She then pulled off her head-dress, and with tears in her eyes, and her hair hanging loose and dishevelled, pretending to pull it, with great outcries, she struck her cheeks, and beat her breast violently, and showed every other sign of the most passionate grief. In this manner she went out, and crossed a spacious court, intending to go to the apartment of the princess Zobeidè.

Nouzhatoul Aouadat, uttering such piercing cries that Zobeidè heard her from her apartment, she ordered her female slaves, who were then in waiting, to inquire whence the cries and lamentations which she heard proceeded. They instantly ran to the lattices, and came back to tell Zobeidè that it was Nouzhatoul Aouadat, who was coming thither, apparently in very great distress. Immediately the princess, impatient to know what had befallen her, arose, and went to meet her, quite to the door of her antechamber.

Nouzhatoul Aouadat here played her part to perfection. The moment she perceived Zobeidè, who herself held back the tapestry, with the door of the antechamber half open, waiting for her, she redoubled her cries as she advanced, tore off her hair by handfuls, struck her cheeks and her breast more violently, and threw herself at her feet, bathing them with her tears. Zobeidè, astonished to see her slave in such unusual affliction, asked her what was the matter, and what misfortune had befallen her.

Instead of answering, the pretended afflicted one continued sobbing some time, apparently taking the utmost pains to suppress it. "Alas! my ever-honoured lady and mistress," cried she at last, her voice much broken with sobs, "What greater, what more fatal evil could befall me than that which obliges me to come and throw myself at the feet of your majesty in the extreme distress to which I am reduced! May God prolong your life in the most perfect health, my ever-to-be-respected princess, and bestow upon you many and happy years! Abou Hassan, the poor Abou Hassan, whom you have honoured with your bounty, and whom you and the Commander of the Faithful gave me for a husband, is no more."

Saying this, Nouzhatoul Aouadat redoubled her tears and sobs, and threw herself again at the feet of the princess. Zobeidè was extremely surprised at this news. "Is Abou Hassan dead?" cried she, "a man in such high health, so agreeable, so amusing; I did not indeed expect to hear so soon of the death of such a man, who promised to live to a great age, and so well also deserved it." She could not help expressing her concern by her tears. The female slaves that were in waiting, and who had often enjoyed the pleasantries of Abou

Hassan, when he was admitted to familiar conversation with Zobeidè and the caliph, witnessed, by their weeping, the regret they felt at her loss, and the share they took in it.

Zobeidè, her female slaves, and Nouzhatoul Aouadat, remained a long time with their handkerchiefs at their eyes, weeping and sobbing at this pretended death. At length, the princess broke silence, "Wretch," cried she, speaking to the supposed widow, "perhaps thou hast caused his death. Thou hast plagued him so much by thy sad temper that thou hast at last brought him to the grave."

Nouzhatoul Aouadat appeared to feel great mortification at this reproach of Zobeidè: "Ah, madam," cried she, "I did not believe I had ever given your majesty, during the whole time I had the honour of being your slave, the smallest reason for your entertaining so disadvantageous an opinion of my behaviour towards a husband so dear to me. I should think myself the most unhappy of women if you were really persuaded of it. I have paid every fond attention to Abou Hassan, which a wife must ever pay to a husband whom she dotes upon; and I can say without vanity, that I have felt for him all the tenderness which he deserved, for his ready compliance with all my moderate wishes, and which, indeed, merited on his part every proof that he was equally fond of me. I am persuaded he would fully justify me on that subject in your majesty's opinion if he were still living. But, madam," added she, her tears flowing afresh, "his hour was come; that alone was the cause of his death."

In truth, Zobeidè had always observed in her slave the same even temper, the same unaffected sweetness, a great degree of docility, and a zeal in everything she undertook in her service, which arose more from inclination than duty. She did not therefore hesitate to believe her on her word, and ordered the superintendent of her treasury to fetch a purse of a hundred pieces of gold, and a piece of brocade. She returned immediately with the purse and the piece of brocade, which at Zobeidè's order she delivered to Nouzhatoul Aouadat.

Upon receiving this handsome present she threw herself at the princess's feet, and made her the most humble acknowledgments, with great satisfaction at her heart that she had succeeded so well. "Go," said Zobeidè, "let the piece of brocade be used to spread over your husband on his bier, and spend the money to defray the expense of a funeral that shall do him the honour he is worthy of. And, as soon as may be, moderate the excess of your affliction: I will take care of you."

Nouzhatoul Aouadat was scarcely out of the presence of Zobeidè than she joyfully dried up her tears, and returned as soon as possible to give Abou Hassan an account of the success she had met with in playing her part. As she entered, Nouzhatoul Aouadat burst into a violent fit of laughing at finding again Abou Hassan in the same situation she had left him, in the middle of the room, and ready prepared for his funeral. "Get up," said she, still laughing, "and behold the fruits of my imposition upon Zobeidè. We shall not die of hunger to-day." Abou Hassan quickly got up, and rejoiced with his wife on seeing the purse and the piece of brocade.

Nouzhatoul Aouadat was so pleased at having succeeded so well in the artifice she had just practised upon the princess, that she could not contain her joy: "This is not enough," said she to her husband in a laugh; "I must pretend to die in my turn, and see whether you will be clever enough to get as much from the caliph as I have done from Zobeidè." "This is exactly the humour of women," replied Abou Hassan; "it is very justly said, they have always the vanity to think they are superior to men, although they seldom

do anything well but by their advice. It is hardly likely that I should not succeed with the caliph as well as you have done—I, who contrived the scheme. But let us lose no time in idle chat; do you now pretend to be dead, and you shall soon see whether I do not manage as well."

Abou Hassan laid his wife in the same place and in the same manner in which he was himself laid, turned her feet towards Mecca, and went out of his chamber in great disorder, his turban ill put on, like a man in great affliction. In this situation he went to the caliph, who was then holding a particular council with the grand vizier Giafar, and the other viziers in whom he placed the most confidence. He presented himself at the door, and the usher, who knew that he had always free access, opened it to him. He entered, with one hand holding a handkerchief before his eyes, to conceal the feigned tears which he let fall in abundance; and with the other, violently beating his breast, and uttering exclamations expressive of the greatest grief.

The caliph, who was accustomed to see Abou Hassan with a countenance always cheerful, and always inspiring others with joy, was surprised at seeing him appear in so melancholy a situation. He took off his attention from the business they were then transacting in the council, in order to ask him the occasion of his grief.

"Commander of the Faithful," answered Abou Hassan, with repeated sighs and sobs, "a greater misfortune could not possibly befall me than what now makes the subject of my affliction. May God grant a long life to your majesty on that throne which you fill with so much glory. Nouzhatoul Aouadat, whom in your goodness you were pleased to bestow upon me, that I might pass the remainder of my life with her, is, alas —!" After this exclamation, Abou Hassan pretended to have his heart so oppressed that he uttered not another word, but shed tears abundantly.

The caliph, who understood that Abou Hassan came to inform him of the death of his wife, appeared extremely affected at it; "God have mercy upon her!" said he, with an air that showed how much he regretted her. "She was a good slave, and Zobeidè and I gave her to you with the design of making you happy; she was worthy of a longer life." The tears then trickled from his eyes, and he was forced to take his handkerchief to wipe them away.

The grief of Abou Hassan, and the tears of the caliph, drew tears, too, from the grand vizier Giafar, and the other viziers. They all lamented the death of Nouzhatoul Aouadat, who in the mean time, was become extremely impatient to know how Abou Hassan had succeeded.

The caliph entertained the same opinion of the husband as Zobeidè had done of the wife, and imagined he had been the cause of her death. "Wretch," said he, in an angry tone of voice, "hast thou not destroyed thy wife by thy ill-treatment of her? Ah! I have no doubt of it; thou shouldst at least have had some regard for the Princess Zobeidè, my wife, who loved her more than any of her slaves, and who only parted with her in order to give her to thee. Is this a proof of thy gratitude?"

"Commander of the Faithful," answered Abou Hassan, pretending to weep more bitterly than ever, "can your majesty for a moment entertain the thought that Abou Hassan, whom you have loaded with your bounty and your favours, and on whom you have conferred honours to which he presumed not to aspire, could be capable of so much ingratitude? I loved Nouzhatoul Aouadat my wife as much on this account as because she possessed so many excellent qualities, that I could not withhold from her all the attachment, all the tenderness, and all the love she deserved. But, please your majesty, she was to die, and God has chosen to let me no longer enjoy the happiness which I held from the bounty of your majesty, and that of your beloved wife."

In short, Abou Hassan found means to counterfeit grief so perfectly by all the outward marks of a true affliction, that the caliph, who indeed had never heard that he had behaved ill to his wife, gave credit to all he said, and did not doubt his sincerity. The treasurer of the palace was present, and the caliph ordered him to go to the treasury and give Abou Hassan a purse of a hundred pieces of gold, together with a fine piece of brocade. Abou Hassan threw himself immediately at the feet of the caliph in token of his gratitude. "Follow the treasurer," said the caliph; "the piece of brocade will serve you to lay over your dead wife, and the money to provide a funeral worthy of her; I have no doubt you will give her this last proof of your love."

Abou Hassan made no answer to these kind words of the caliph, but bowed profoundly as he retired. He followed the treasurer, and when the purse and piece of brocade were delivered to him, he returned to his house perfectly satisfied, and thoroughly happy in himself, at having so readily and easily found means to supply his present necessity which had occasioned him so much anxiety.

Nouzhatoul Aouadat, tired at having been so long a time in confinement, did not wait till Abou Hassan should bid her quit her uncomfortable situation. As soon as she heard the door open, she ran towards him: "Well," said she, "has the caliph been as easily imposed upon as Zobeidè was?" "You see," replied Abou Hassan, joking and showing her the purse and the piece of brocade, "that I know how to counterfeit affliction for the death of a wife who is all the while alive and in health as well as you do to mourn for that of a husband who is also living."

Abou Hassan was very clear that this twofold artifice must have its consequences. Wherefore he cautioned his wife as well as he could upon all that was likely to happen, in order that they might act in concert, and he added, "the more we succeed in placing the caliph and Zobeidè in some sort of embarrassment, the more pleased they will at last be; and perhaps they will testify their satisfaction by some fresh marks of kindness." This last consideration induced them more than any to carry on their artifice to the greatest possible length.

Although there were affairs of importance to settle in the council which was then holding, the caliph, nevertheless, impatient to go to the princess Zobeidè, to condole with her on the death of her slave, rose very soon after Abou Hassan's departure, and adjourned the council to another day; the grand vizier and the other viziers took their leave and retired.

As soon as they were gone, the caliph said to Mesrour, chief of the eunuchs of the palace, who was almost always near his person, and who besides was acquainted with all his designs, "Follow me, and share with me in the grief of the princess for the death of her slave Nouzhatoul Aouadat."

They went together to Zobeidè's apartment: when the caliph was at the door, he put back the tapestry a little way, and perceived the princess sitting upon her sofa in great affliction, and her eyes still bathed in tears.

The caliph entered, and walking up towards Zobeidè, "Madam," said he, "it is unnecessary to tell you how great a share I take with you in your affliction, since you are not ignorant that I am as sensible to what gives you pain as I am to what gives you pleasure; but we are all mortal, and we must give back to God that life which he hath given us, whenever he requires it. Nouzhatoul Aouadat, your slave, had in truth qualities, which deservedly gained your esteem; and I very much approve that you give proofs of it after her death. Consider, however, that your sorrows will never bring her back again to life, so that if you will follow my advice, and have any regard for me, you will take comfort upon this loss, and pay more regard to a life which you

know to be very precious to me, and which constitutes the whole happiness of mine."

If the princess was charmed with the tender sentiments which accompanied the caliph's compliments, she was also otherwise much surprised to hear of the death of Nouzhatoul Aouadat, which she did not expect. This intelligence threw her into such a state of astonishment that she remained some time unable to reply. Her surprise was much increased to hear an account so entirely different from what she had just been told, and it deprived her of speech; at length, upon recovering herself, and regaining her voice, "Commander of the Faithful," said she, with an air and tone still expressive of her astonishment, "I am very sensible to all the tender sentiments which you express for me; but allow me to say that I do not at all understand the intelligence you give me of the death of my slave: she is in perfect health; God preserve us both, sire, but if you see me afflicted, it is at the death of Abou Hassan her husband, your favourite, whom I esteem as much for the regard I know you have for him, as because you have had the goodness to introduce him to my acquaintance, and that he has sometimes most agreeably entertained me. But, sire, the insensibility which I see in you at his death, and the forgetfulness you manifest in so very little time after the proofs you have given me of the pleasure you received from having him near you, fill me with surprise and astonishment. And this insensibility appears to me the more from the change you seem disposed to make, in telling me of the death of my slave, instead of speaking of his death."

The caliph, who supposed he was perfectly well informed of the death of the slave, and who had reason to believe it from what he had seen and heard, began to laugh and raise his shoulders at hearing Zobeidè talk in this manner. "Mesrour," said he, turning towards and speaking to him, "what say you to this speech of the princess? Is it not true that ladies have sometimes strange wanderings of the understanding, that one can scarcely pardon? For, in short, you have both heard and seen, as well as myself." And turning again to Zobeidè, "Madam," said he, "shed no more tears for Abou Hassan, for he is perfectly well. Weep rather for the death of your dear slave: it is scarcely a moment since her husband came into my apartment all in tears, and so much afflicted as to give me pain, to announce to me the death of his wife. I ordered a purse of a hundred pieces of gold, and a piece of brocade, to be given him, towards consoling him, and defraying the funeral expenses of the dead lady. Mesrour here was witness of all that passed, and can tell you the same thing."

This discourse of the caliph did not appear to the princess to be serious; she thought he only meant to impose upon her. "Commander of the Faithful," replied she, "although it be your custom to joke, I must say this is not a proper time to do so. What I have been saying is quite a serious matter; the death of my slave is not the present question, but the death of her husband Abou Hassan, whose fate I lament, and which you ought to lament with me."

"And I, madam," replied the caliph, becoming now much more serious, "I tell you without jesting that you are mistaken. It is Nouzhatoul Aouadat who is dead; and it is Abou Hassan who is alive and in perfect health."

Zobeidè was piqued at this dry reply of the caliph. "Commander of the Faithful," resumed she in an earnest accent, "may God keep you from remaining long under this mistake; you would make me suppose you are not in your usual right mind. Allow me to repeat once more that it is Abou Hassan that is dead, and that Nouzhatoul Aouadat, my slave, widow of the deceased, is certainly alive. It is not an hour since she left me. She came hither quite

in despair, and in a state which alone would have drawn tears from me, ~~ether~~ though she had not, amidst continual sobs, told me the real cause of her affliction. All my women have been weeping with me, and they can give you the most convincing proofs. They will tell you also that I made her a present of a purse of a hundred pieces of gold, and a piece of brocade; and the grief you observed in my countenance when you entered, was as much caused by the death of her husband as by the distress in which I had just seen her. I was even going to send you my compliments of condolence at the time you made your appearance."

"Madam," cried the caliph, with a loud laugh at these words of Zobeidè, "this is a very strange obstinacy, and for my part I must tell you," resuming his serious tone, "that it is Nouzhatoul Aouadat who is dead." "No, I tell you," replied Zobeidè instantly and earnestly also, "it is Abou Hassan who is dead; you shall never make me believe otherwise."

Fire sparkled in the caliph's eyes from anger; he sat on the sofa, but at a great distance from the princess; and speaking to Mesrour, "Go this moment," said he, "and see which of the two is dead; and instantly bring me word. Although I am quite certain that it is Nouzhatoul Aouadat who is dead, I would rather take this step than be any longer positive in a matter of which I am nevertheless perfectly convinced."

The caliph had not ended before Mesrour was gone. "You will see in a moment," continued he, speaking to Zobeidè, "who is right, you or I." "For my part," replied Zobeidè, "I very well know that I am right, and you will yourself see that it is Abou Hassan who is dead, as I told you." "And I," resumed the caliph, "am so assured that it is Nouzhatoul Aouadat, that I will bet you any wager that you please that she is not in being, and that Abou Hassan is very well." "Do not think to carry your point so," replied Zobeidè; "I accept your wager; I am so persuaded of the death of Abou Hassan, that I am ready to stake whatever I hold most precious against what you please of ever so little value. You very well know my turn and inclination, and therefore what I love best; you have only to choose and propose, I will abide by it, be the consequence what it may." "Since this is the case," said the caliph, "I stake then my garden of delights against your palace of pictures. One is as good as the other." "Whether your garden," replied Zobeidè, "is better than my palace is not the question at present between us. The business is for you to select whatever you please of mine to set against what you may bet on your part. I will consent to it, and the wager is settled. I shall not be the first to retract, I declare to God." The caliph took the same oath, and they waited in expectation of Mesrour's return.

While the caliph and Zobeidè were contending so earnestly, and with so much warmth, whether it was Abou Hassan or Nouzhatoul Aouadat that was dead, Abou Hassan, who had foreseen their altercation upon this point, was extremely attentive to whatever might happen. When he saw Mesrour at a distance through the lattice, near which he sat conversing with his wife, and observed that he was coming straight to their apartments, he immediately understood for what purpose he was despatched. He told his wife to pretend to be dead once more, as they had before agreed, and to lose no time.

In fact, there was no time to lose, and it was as much as he could do, before Mesrour arrived, to place his wife upon the ground again, and to spread over her the piece of brocade which the caliph had ordered to be given him. He then opened the door of his apartment, and with a melancholy and dejected countenance, holding his handkerchief before his eyes, he seated himself at the head of the pretended deceased.

Scarcely was this done, when Mesrour entered the chamber. The funeral

know to be very precious to me, and which constitutes the whole happiness of mine."

If the princess was charmed with the tender sentiments which accompanied the caliph's compliments, she was also otherwise much surprised to hear of the death of Nouzhatoul Aouadat, which she did not expect. This intelligence threw her into such a state of astonishment that she remained some time unable to reply. Her surprise was much increased to hear an account so entirely different from what she had just been told, and it deprived her of speech; at length, upon recovering herself, and regaining her voice, "Commander of the Faithful," said she, with an air and tone still expressive of her astonishment, "I am very sensible to all the tender sentiments which you express for me; but allow me to say that I do not at all understand the intelligence you give me of the death of my slave: she is in perfect health; God preserve us both, sire, but if you see me afflicted, it is at the death of Abou Hassan her husband, your favourite, whom I esteem as much for the regard I know you have for him, as because you have had the goodness to introduce him to my acquaintance, and that he has sometimes most agreeably entertained me. But, sire, the insensibility which I see in you at his death, and the forgetfulness you manifest in so very little time after the proofs you have given me of the pleasure you received from having him near you, fill me with surprise and astonishment. And this insensibility appears to me the more from the change you seem disposed to make, in telling me of the death of my slave, instead of speaking of his death."

The caliph, who supposed he was perfectly well informed of the death of the slave, and who had reason to believe it from what he had seen and heard, began to laugh and raise his shoulders at hearing Zobeidè talk in this manner. "Mesrour," said he, turning towards and speaking to him, "what say you to this speech of the princess? Is it not true that ladies have sometimes strange wanderings of the understanding, that one can scarcely pardon? For, in short, you have both heard and seen, as well as myself." And turning again to Zobeidè, "Madam," said he, "shed no more tears for Abou Hassan, for he is perfectly well. Weep rather for the death of your dear slave: it is scarcely a moment since her husband came into my apartment all in tears, and so much afflicted as to give me pain, to announce to me the death of his wife. I ordered a purse of a hundred pieces of gold, and a piece of brocade, to be given him, towards consoling him, and defraying the funeral expenses of the dead lady. Mesrour here was witness of all that passed, and can tell you the same thing."

This discourse of the caliph did not appear to the princess to be serious; she thought he only meant to impose upon her. "Commander of the Faithful," replied she, "although it be your custom to joke, I must say this is not a proper time to do so. What I have been saying is quite a serious matter; the death of my slave is not the present question, but the death of her husband Abou Hassan, whose fate I lament, and which you ought to lament with me."

"And I, madam," replied the caliph, becoming now much more serious, "I tell you without jesting that you are mistaken. It is Nouzhatoul Aouadat who is dead; and it is Abou Hassan who is alive and in perfect health."

Zobeidè was piqued at this dry reply of the caliph. "Commander of the Faithful," resumed she in an earnest accent, "may God keep you from remaining long under this mistake; you would make me suppose you are not in your usual right mind. Allow me to repeat once more that it is Abou Hassan that is dead, and that Nouzhatoul Aouadat, my slave, widow of the deceased, is certainly alive. It is not an hour since she left me. She came hither quite

THE SLEEPER AWAKENED.

in despair, and in a state which alone would have drawn tears from me, ~~either~~ though she had not, amidst continual sobs, told me the real cause of her affliction. All my women have been weeping with me, and they can give you the most convincing proofs. They will tell you also that I made her a present of a purse of a hundred pieces of gold, and a piece of brocade; and the grief you observed in my countenance when you entered, ~~was as much caused by the~~ death of her husband as by the distress in which I had just seen her. I was even going to send you my compliments of condolence at the time you made your appearance."

"Madam," cried the caliph, with a loud laugh at these words of Zobeidè, "this is a very strange obstinacy, and for my part I must tell you," resuming his serious tone, "that it is Nouzhatoul Aouadat who is dead." "No, I tell you," replied Zobeidè instantly and earnestly also, "it is Abou Hassan who is dead; you shall never make me believe otherwise."

Fire sparkled in the caliph's eyes from anger; he sat on the sofa, but at a great distance from the princess; and speaking to Mesrour, "Go this moment," said he, "and see which of the two is dead; and instantly bring me word. Although I am quite certain that it is Nouzhatoul Aouadat who is dead, I would rather take this step than be any longer positive in a matter of which I am nevertheless perfectly convinced."

The caliph had not ended before Mesrour was gone. "You will see in a moment," continued he, speaking to Zobeidè, "who is right, you or I." "For my part," replied Zobeidè, "I very well know that I am right, and you will yourself see that it is Abou Hassan who is dead, as I told you." "And I," resumed the caliph, "am so assured that it is Nouzhatoul Aouadat, that I will bet you any wager that you please that she is not in being, and that Abou Hassan is very well." "Do not think to carry your point so," replied Zobeidè; "I accept your wager; I am so persuaded of the death of Abou Hassan, that I am ready to stake whatever I hold most precious against what you please of ever so little value. You very well know my turn and inclination, and therefore what I love best; you have only to choose and propose, I will abide by it, be the consequence what it may." "Since this is the case," said the caliph, "I stake then my garden of delights against your palace of pictures. One is as good as the other." "Whether your garden," replied Zobeidè, "is better than my palace is not the question at present between us. The business is for you to select whatever you please of mine to set against what you may bet on your part. I will consent to it, and the wager is settled. I shall not be the first to retract, I declare to God." The caliph took the same oath, and they waited in expectation of Mesrour's return.

While the caliph and Zobeidè were contending so earnestly, and with so much warmth, whether it was Abou Hassan or Nouzhatoul Aouadat that was dead, Abou Hassan, who had foreseen their altercation upon this point, was extremely attentive to whatever might happen. When he saw Mesrour at a distance through the lattice, near which he sat conversing with his wife, and observed that he was coming straight to their apartments, he immediately understood for what purpose he was despatched. He told his wife to pretend to be dead once more, as they had before agreed, and to lose no time.

In fact, there was no time to lose, and it was as much as he could do, before Mesrour arrived, to place his wife upon the ground again, and to spread over her the piece of brocade which the caliph had ordered to be given him. He then opened the door of his apartment, and with a melancholy and dejected countenance, holding his handkerchief before his eyes, he seated himself at the head of the pretended deceased.

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THE ARABIAN NIGHTS.

revelation, which he immediately saw, gave him secret pleasure as far as it regarded the commission with which he was charged by the caliph. As soon as Abou Hassan saw him, he rose to meet him, and respectfully kissing his hand, "Sir," said he, sighing and lamenting, "you see me in the greatest affliction possible for the death of my dear wife Nouzhatoul Aouadat, whom you honoured with your kindness."

Mesrour was much affected with this address, nor was it possible for him to refuse a few tears to the memory of the deceased. He lifted up the cloth a little way which covered the body towards her head, that he might look at her face, which was then to be seen : and letting it fall again after he had taken a slight view, with a deep sigh, he said, "There is no other god but God : we must all submit to His will, and every creature must return to Him. Nouzhatoul Aouadat, my good sister !" added he, sighing again, "your destiny has been of very short duration : God have mercy upon you !" He then turned towards Abou Hassan, who was bathed in tears : "It is not without reason," said he, "that women sometimes know not what they say, which cannot be excused. Zobeidè, most excellent mistress as she is, is now in this predicament. She would maintain to the caliph that it was you who was dead, and not your wife. And let the caliph say what he will to the contrary, in order to convince her by the strongest and most serious assurances, he cannot succeed. He has even called me as a witness to vouch for the truth in confirmation of it, since you well know I was present when you came to tell him this afflicting news ; but all to no purpose. They were so earnest and obstinate in their altercation, that it would not have ended if the caliph, in order to convince Zobeidè, had not determined to send me hither to know the truth with certainty. But I am afraid it will not answer ; for take what method you please with women to make them understand a matter, they are unconquerably obstinate when once they have taken a thing into their heads."

"God preserve the Commander of the Faithful in the possession and good use of his excellent understanding," replied Abou Hassan, the tears still in his eyes, and his words interrupted by sobs ; "you see the state of the case, and that I have not imposed upon his majesty. And would to God," cried he, the better to carry on the cheat, "that I had never found occasion to go to him with such melancholy, such afflicting information. Alas !" added he, "I cannot find words to express the irreparable loss I have this day sustained." "True," replied Mesrour, "and I can assure you I share very sincerely in your affliction. However, you must be comforted, and not thus entirely give way to your grief. I must leave you, contrary to my inclination, to return to the caliph ; but I beg as a favour," continued he, "that you would not let the body be carried away until I return, for I am desirous of being present at her interment, and following her with my prayers."

Mesrour was going away to give an account of his commission, when Abou Hassan, who waited upon him to the door, observed that he had no claim to the honour he intended him. Lest Mesrour should turn back immediately to say something else, he followed him with his eye for some time, and when he saw him at a considerable distance, he came back to his chamber, and freeing Nouzhatoul Aouadat from the covering under which she lay, "This then," said he, "is a new scene in our play, but I suppose it will not be the last ; and certainly the princess Zobeidè will not pay any regard to Mesrour's report, but on the contrary, will laugh at him : her reasons are too strong against giving credit to him, so that we must expect some new event." While Abou Hassan was saying this, Nouzhatoul Aouadat had time to put on her dress again ; they both then resumed their seat on the sofa near the lattice, in order to observe what was passing.

In the mean time Mesroure reached Zobeidè's apartment; he entered her cabinet laughing, and clapping his hands, as a man would do who had something agreeable to communicate. The caliph was naturally of an impatient temper; he wished to have the matter instantly cleared up; besides, he was urged on to it by the challenge of the princess; as soon, therefore, as he saw Mesroure, "Wicked slave," cried he, "this is no time for laughing; you say not a word; speak out boldly, who is dead, the husband or the wife?"

"Commander of the Faithful," immediately answered Mesroure putting on a serious countenance, "it is Nouzhatoul Aouadat that is dead, and Abou Hassan is still as much afflicted as when he lately appeared before your majesty."

Without giving time for Mesroure to proceed, the caliph broke out: "Good news!" cried he, with a loud burst of laughter; "it is only a moment since Zobeidè, your mistress, was in possession of the palace of pictures; it is now mine. It was betted against my garden of delights since you left us, so that you could not have given me greater pleasure; I will take care to reward you. But no more of this—tell me every particular of what you have seen."

"Commander of the Faithful," Mesroure went on, "when I reached Abou Hassan's apartments, I went into the chamber, which was open; I found him still weeping, and very much afflicted at the death of his wife Nouzhatoul Aouadat. He was seated near the head of the deceased, who was placed in the middle of the room, with her feet turned towards Mecca, the body covered with the piece of brocade which your majesty lately presented to Abou Hassan. After testifying the share I took in his grief. I drew near, and lifting the covering of the deceased near the head, I knew again Nouzhatoul Aouadat, whose face was already swollen and much changed. I very earnestly exhorted Abou Hassan to be comforted, and when I came away, I expressed my wish to be present at the interment of his wife, and that he would not suffer the corpse to be carried to the grave till I should come. This is all I have to tell your majesty in consequence of the order which you gave me."

When Mesroure had finished his report: "I ask you no more questions," said the caliph, laughing very heartily; "I am perfectly satisfied with your exactness." And addressing the princess Zobeidè, "Well, madam," said the caliph, "have you anything still to say in opposition to so evident a truth? Do you to continue to think that Nouzhatoul Aouadat is still living and that Abou Hassan is dead? and do you not confess that you have lost your wager?"

Zobeidè could by no means be satisfied that Mesroure had made a true report. "How, sire, can you think that I shall believe this slave? He is an impetuous fellow, who knows not what he says. I am neither blind nor deprived of my senses; I have seen with my own eyes Nouzhatoul Aouadat under the greatest affliction. I have myself spoken to her, and I heard perfectly what she told me concerning the death of her husband."

"Madam," returned Mesroure, "I swear by your life, and by the life of the Commander of the Faithful, the most precious things in the world to me, that Nouzhatoul Aouadat is dead, and that Abou Hassan is alive." "Thou liest, vile and contemptible slave," replied Zobeidè in a violent passion, "and I will confound thee in a moment." She immediately called her women by clapping her hands; they instantly entered in great numbers. "Come hither," said the princess to them, "tell me the truth; who is the person that came to me a short time before the Commander of the Faithful made his visit here?" The women all answered that it was the poor afflicted Nouzhatoul Aouadat. And speaking to her treasurers, "What was it I ordered you to give her upon going away?" "Madam," replied the treasurers, "I gave to Nouzhatoul Aouadat, by your majesty's order, a purse of a hundred pieces of gold, and a piece of brocade, which she took away with her." "Well then, wretch, unworthy slave,"

said Zobeidè to Mesrour in great indignation; "what canst thou say to all thou hast now heard? Whom thinkest thou I am now to believe, thee, or my treasures, my women, and myself?"

Mesrour did not fail in reasons to oppose this address of the princess, but, as he was afraid of irritating her still more, he chose the more prudent part, and remained silent, thoroughly convinced all the while by the proofs he had met with, that Nouzhatoul Aouadat was dead, and not Abou Hassan.

During this altercation between Zobeidè and Mesrour, the caliph, who had observed the proofs brought on both sides, and which each party thought irrefragable, and still persuaded that the princess was in the wrong, as well by what had passed in his own conversation with Abou Hassan, as by what Mesrour just reported, laughed heartily at seeing Zobeidè in such a rage with Mesrour. "Madam, to speak once more," said he to her, "I know not who says that women are sometimes beside themselves: allow me to say, that you make it appear nothing was ever more truly said. Mesrour is but just returned from Abou Hassan's apartments; he tells you he has seen with his own eyes Nouzhatoul Aouadat lying dead in the middle of her chamber, and Abou Hassan sitting near the deceased; and notwithstanding this testimony, which cannot reasonably be objected against, you will not believe it: it is a matter I cannot understand."

Zobeidè seemed not to hear the representations of the caliph; "Commander of the Faithful," resumed she, "pardon me if I have a little suspicion of you: I see plainly that you are leagued with Mesrour in a design to tease me, and to try my patience to the utmost. And as I perceive that the report which Mesrour has made is arranged between you, I beg you would allow me to send also a person on my part to Abou Hassan's apartments, that I may know whether I am in error."

The caliph gave his consent, and the princess sent her nurse upon this important errand; she was a woman far advanced in life, who had always remained with Zobeidè from her infancy, and who was now present with the other women. "Nurse," said she, "attend to what I say: go to Abou Hassan's house, or rather to that of Nouzhatoul Aouadat, since Abou Hassan is dead; you see what is the nature of my dispute with the Commander of the Faithful and with Mesrour: there is no occasion to say any more to you; clear up the whole to me, and if you bring me back a good account, a valuable present shall be made to you; go quickly, and return without delay."

The nurse departed, to the great joy of the caliph, who was delighted to see Zobeidè in this embarrassment; but Mesrour, extremely mortified at seeing the princess so angry with him, was in search of some means to appease her, and to contrive that the caliph and Zobeidè should be both satisfied with him: for which reason he was delighted, as soon as he saw Zobeidè desirous of sending her nurse to Abou Hassan's, because he was persuaded that the report she would make would correspond entirely with his own, and would serve to justify him and restore him again to her favour.

Abou Hassan, in the mean time, who was always placed sentinel at the lattice, perceived the nurse at some distance. He immediately conceived what must be her errand on the part of Zobeidè. He called his wife, and without a moment's hesitation as to what was to be done, "Here," said he, "comes the princess's nurse to inquire into the truth; I must again play the dead man in my turn."

Everything was ready: Nouzhatoul placed Abou Hassan upon the ground, threw over him the piece of brocade which Zobeidè had given her, and placed the turban on his face; the nurse in her eagerness to execute her commission, came thither as quickly as she could. Entering the chamber, she perceived

Nouzhatoul Aouadat with her hair dishevelled, all in tears, beating her breast and cheeks, and uttering loud lamentations.

She drew near this pretended widow: "My dear Nouzhatoul Aouadat," said she, in a very melancholy tone of voice, "do not come to disturb your grief, nor to prevent your shedding tears for a husband so tenderly." "Ah! my good mother," instantly replied Zobeidè's women, in a low, and in a tone to excite compassion, "you see to what a wretched situation I am reduced, overwhelmed with distress at the recent loss of my husband, Abou Hassan, whom Zobeidè, my dear mistress and yours, and the Commander of the Faithful, had given me for a husband! Abou Hassan, my dear husband," cried she again, "what have I done that thou shouldst so soon abandon me? Have not I always followed your inclination rather than my own? Alas! what will become of the poor Nouzhatoul Aouadat?"

The nurse was in utter astonishment at seeing everything contrary to what the chief of the eunuchs had reported to the caliph. "This black-faced Mesroul," exclaimed she earnestly, raising her hands, "well deserves the curse of God, for having been the occasion of so great a quarrel between my good mistress and the Commander of the Faithful, by such a notorious lie as he has told them. I must, my child," added she, addressing herself to Nouzhatoul Aouadat, "I must tell you the wickedness and falsehood of this wretch Mesroul, who has maintained with inconceivable impudence to our good mistress, that you were dead, and Abou Hassan living." "Alas! my good mother," cried Nouzhatoul Aouadat, "would to God he had spoken the truth! I should not be under the affliction you see me, nor be lamenting a husband that was so dear to me." At these last words she melted into tears, and bewailed her forlorn state with redoubled cries and lamentations.

The nurse, much affected by the tears of Nouzhatoul Aouadat, seated herself near her, and shedding tears also, she insensibly approached the head of Abou Hassan, raised his turban a little, and uncovered Abou Hassan's face, to see whether she should know him. "Ah! poor Abou Hassan," said she, covering him again almost directly, "I pray God to have mercy upon you: farewell, my child," said she to Nouzhatoul Aouadat; "if I could stay with you a longer time I should be happy in doing so; but I must not stop a moment; my duty urges me to go instantly and deliver my good mistress from the distressful state of anxiety into which this black villain has thrown her by his impudent falsehood, assuring her with an oath that you were dead."

Zobeidè's nurse had scarcely closed the door upon leaving them when Nouzhatoul Aouadat, who was well satisfied she would not return, as she was in such haste to return to the princess, wiped her eyes, took off the things in which Abou Hassan was wrapped, and they returned together to their places on the sofa, patiently waiting the event of their artifice, and always prepared to get out of the difficulty, whatever turn the matter should take.

Zobeidè's nurse in the mean time, notwithstanding her great age, returned with a quicker pace than she came out. The pleasure of bringing the princess a good account, and still more, the hope of a good reward, occasioned her to arrive in a very short time; she entered the cabinet of the princess almost out of breath, and giving an account of her commission, she related in an artless manner all she had seen.

Zobeidè heard the nurse's report with a satisfaction she could not conceal. The moment she had finished, she said to the nurse in a tone of voice expressive of having gained her point: "Repeat the same thing to the Commander of the Faithful, who looks upon us as deprived of our senses, and who besides would have it thought that we have no sentiment of religion, that we have no fear of God. Tell it to this wicked black slave, who has the insolence to main-

tain to my face what is not true in a matter which I know better than he does."

Mesrour, who was in ~~exaggeration~~ ^{reason} that the nurse's expedition, and the report she was to make, ~~was~~ ^{was} ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ ~~reason~~ ^{reason} favourable, was excessively mortified to find that all turned out ~~to~~ ^{to} ~~be~~ ^{be} ~~as~~ ^{as} ~~she~~ ^{she} ~~had~~ ^{had} ~~said~~ ^{said}. Besides, he was very much chagrined at the excessive ~~silence~~ ^{silence}, ~~thoroughly~~ ^{thoroughly} Zobeidè showed towards him about a fact which appeared to ~~be~~ ^{be} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~most~~ ^{most} ~~certain~~ ^{certain} thing in the world. For this reason he was much ~~pleased~~ ^{pleased} ~~at~~ ^{at} ~~finding~~ ^{finding} an opportunity of explaining himself freely to the nurse rather than ~~to~~ ^{to} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~princess~~ ^{princess}, whom he did not presume to answer, for fear of being guilty of disrespect: "Toothless old woman," said he to the nurse, "I tell thee plainly, thou art a liar: there is not a word of truth in what thou sayest; I saw with my own eyes Nouzhatoul Aouadat lying dead in the middle of her chamber." "Thou art a liar, a notorious liar thyself," replied the nurse, with an air of insult, "to dare to maintain such a falsehood, and to me, who am just returned from Abou Hassan's house, whom I saw lying dead, and who has left his wife behind him perfectly alive."

"I am not an impostor," replied Mesrour; "it is thou who art trying to mislead us." "What a gross piece of impudence," returned the nurse, "to presume thus to charge me with a falsehood in the presence of their majesties, who am just returned from seeing with my own eyes the truth of what I have the honour of reporting." "Nurse," rejoined Mesrour, "thou hadst better say no more; thou art doting."

Zobeidè could no longer bear this want of respect in Mesrour, who, without scruple, treated her nurse so contemptuously in her presence. Without, therefore, giving her nurse time to answer this atrocious reproach: "Commander of the Faithful," said she to the caliph, "I appeal to your justice respecting this insolent behaviour, which concerns you as much as myself." She could say no more, her vexation was so excessive, but burst into tears.

The caliph, who had heard all this altercation, was very much embarrassed. It was to no purpose that he silently gave all possible attention to the matter. He knew not what to think of so much contradiction. The princess, for her part, as well as Mesrour, the nurse, and female slaves, who were present, knew not what to think of it, and were silent. The caliph at last began: "Madam," said he, addressing himself to Zobeidè, "I see clearly we are all liars; I first, you next, then Mesrour, and then the nurse—at least, it appears that no one of us is more worthy of credit than another; so let us rise, and go ourselves to the spot, and make out on which side the truth lies; I see no other way of clearing up our doubts and quieting our minds."

Saying this, the caliph rose, the princess followed him, and Mesrour walking before to open the door: "Commander of the Faithful," said he, "I am much rejoiced your majesty has taken this step; and I shall be more so when I shall convince the nurse, not that she is doting, because that expression has had the misfortune to offend my good mistress, but that the report she made is not true." The nurse quickly replied, "Hold thy tongue, black face; nobody here but thyself can be possibly doting."

Zobeidè, who was unusually angry with Mesrour, could not bear that he should again attack her nurse. She took her part therefore: "Vile slave," said she, "whatever thou mayest say, I still maintain that my nurse has spoken the truth; thee I can only regard as a liar." "Madam," answered Mesrour, "if the nurse is so truly assured that Nouzhatoul Aouadat is alive, and that Abou Hassan is dead, let her make but some bet with me; she would not dare." The nurse was ready with an answer: "I actually do dare," said she, "and take thee at thy word. Let us see whether thou wilt stand to it." Mesrour kept his word; the nurse and he made a wager in the presence of the caliph

and the princess, of a piece of gold brocade, with silver flowers, such as either of them should pitch upon.

The apartment which the caliph and Zobeidè left, although at some distance, was directly opposite to those in which Abou Hassan and Nouzhatoul Aouadat lived. Abou Hassan, who saw them coming, preceded by Mesrour, and followed by the nurse, with a great number of Zobeidè's women, immediately apprised his wife of it, telling her that he never was more mistaken if they were not to be soon honoured with a visit from them. Nouzhatoul Aouadat looked through the lattice and saw them coming. Although her husband had told her beforehand what was likely to happen, she was, nevertheless, surprised: "What shall we do?" cried she. "We are ruined." "Not at all, don't be afraid," returned Abou Hassan very coolly: "have you already forgotten what we have said upon this subject? Let us both pretend to be dead, as we have each of us pretended before, and as we have agreed; and all, you shall see, will turn out well. At the rate they are coming, we shall be ready before they reach the door."

In fact, Abou Hassan and his wife determined to cover themselves as well as they could, and in this situation, after they had placed themselves one beside the other, in the middle of the chamber, each under the piece of brocade, they waited quietly for the arrival of the company, who were coming to visit them.

This illustrious company at last arrived; Mesrour opened the door, and the caliph and Zobeidè entered the chamber, followed by all their people. They were much surprised, and stood motionless at the dismal spectacle which presented itself to their view. No one knew what opinion to form upon the subject. Zobeidè at last broke silence: "Alas!" said she to the caliph, "they are both dead! This is your doing," she went on, looking at the caliph and Mesrour, "by your obstinately endeavouring to impose upon me that my dear slave was dead, as indeed she is, and without doubt, as will appear, for grief at having lost her husband." "Say rather, madam," replied the caliph, with a contrary prejudice, "that Nouzhatoul Aouadat died first, and that the poor Abou Hassan fell under the affliction of seeing his wife, your dear slave, die. So you must allow that you have lost your wager, and that the palace of pictures is now fairly mine." "And I," replied Zobeidè, with a spirit excited by the contradiction of the caliph, "I maintain that you have lost, and that your favourite garden belongs to me. Abou Hassan died first because my nurse told you, as well as me, that she saw his wife alive, and lamenting her husband's death."

This altercation of the caliph with Zobeidè brought on another; Mesrour and the nurse were upon the same footing with them; they too had betted, and each asserted the claim to have won. The dispute was extremely warm between the chief eunuch and the nurse, who were upon the point of proceeding to very gross abuse.

At last the caliph, reflecting upon all that had passed, jointly agreed that Zobeidè had as much reason as himself to maintain that she was the winner. Mortified at not being able to come at the truth in this matter, he drew near the two dead bodies, and seated himself towards their heads, endeavouring himself to come at some expedient which should determine the wager in his own favour, and against Zobeidè. "Yes," cried he a moment after, "I swear by God's holy name, that I will give a thousand pieces of my own money to the person who shall ascertain to me which of the two died first."

The caliph had scarcely said these last words when he heard a voice, under the brocade which covered Abou Hassan, that cried: "Commander of the Faithful, it is I who died first; give me the thousand pieces of gold." And at the same time he saw Abou Hassan, who freed himself from the brocade which

covered him, and who threw himself at his feet. His wife uncovered herself in the same manner, and ran to throw herself at the feet of Zobeidè, but out of decency she wrapped herself in the brocade; Zobeidè set up a loud cry, which increased the terror of all those who were present. The princess at last recovered from her fright, and was overjoyed at seeing her dear slave risen again, almost at the moment she felt inconsolable at having seen her dead. "Ah! you wicked one!" cried she, "you have occasioned me much suffering for your sake in more ways than one." I pardon you, however, from the bottom of my heart, since I find that you are not actually dead.

The caliph on his part had not taken the thing so much to heart; far from being afraid when he heard Abou Hassan's voice, he was near bursting with laughter on seeing them both freeing themselves from their coverings, and hearing Abou Hassan very seriously demanding the thousand pieces of gold which he had promised to the person who should ascertain which died first. "So then, Abou Hassan," said the caliph, laughing with fresh violence, "have you determined to make me die with laughter? How came it into your head thus to surprise both Zobeidè and me in a way we could not possibly be upon our guard against?"

"Commander of the Faithful," replied Abou Hassan; "I will tell you the whole without disguise. Your majesty very well knows that I always had a turn for good living. The wife you gave me has not induced me to relax in this point; on the contrary, I have met with an inclination in her to encourage this propensity. With such dispositions, your majesty will easily believe that, had our purse been as deep as the sea in addition to the wealth of your majesty, we should soon have found the means of squandering everything; this has been the case with us. Ever since we have been together we have spared in nothing, while we were living at large upon your majesty's bounty. This morning, after having settled accounts with our cook, we found, upon satisfying his demand, and paying besides some other debts, there remained nothing of all the money you had given us. Thus reflections on the past, and resolutions to do better in future, crowded on our minds; we proposed a thousand schemes which we soon after abandoned. At last the shame of seeing ourselves reduced to so wretched a situation, and our not daring to inform your majesty of it, set us upon inventing this plan to supply our wants by diverting you with this little artifice, which we entreat your majesty will have the goodness to forgive."

The caliph and Zobeidè were very well satisfied with the sincerity of Abou Hassan; they did not seem at all angry at what had passed; on the contrary, Zobeidè, who had always taken the matter in too serious a light, could not help laughing, in her turn, at the thought of all that Abou Hassan had devised to bring about his design. The caliph, who had scarcely at all ceased laughing, so singular did the scheme appear to him, said to Abou Hassan and his wife as he rose: "Follow me, both of you; I will give you the thousand pieces of gold that I promised you for the joy I feel that you are neither of you dead."

"Commander of the Faithful," resumed Zobeidè, "content yourself, I beseech you, with causing the thousand pieces of gold to be given to Abou Hassan: you owe them only to him: as to his wife, that is my business." At the same time she ordered her treasurers, who came with her, to give a thousand pieces of gold to Nouzhatoul Aouadat also, in proof of the joy she felt on her part that she was still alive.

Thus did Abou Hassan and Nouzhatoul Aouadat a long time preserve the favour of the caliph Heroun Alraschid and of Zobeidè, and gained enough from their bounty abundantly to supply all their wants for the remainder of their lives.

THE HISTORY OF ALADDIN, OR THE WONDERFUL LAMP.

IN the capital of one of the richest and most extensive kingdoms of China there lived a tailor whose name was Mustafa, and who had no other distinction than that of his trade. This tailor was very poor, the profits of his trade barely producing enough for himself, his wife, and one son, with whom God had blessed him, to subsist upon.

Mustafa's son, whose name was Aladdin, had been brought up in a very idle and negligent manner, and had been so much left to himself, that he had contracted the most vicious inclinations. He was obstinate, disobedient, and mischievous, and regarded nothing his father or mother said to him. He was scarcely more than a child when he contracted the habit of being always from home. He generally went out early in the morning, and spent the whole day in playing in the public streets with other boys about the same age who were as idle as himself.

When he was old enough to learn any trade, his father, who was unable to have him taught any other than what he himself followed, took him to his shop, and began to show him how he should use the needle. But neither kindness nor the fear of punishment was able to restrain his volatile and restless disposition; nor could his father by any method make him attend to his business. No sooner was Mustafa's back turned than Aladdin was off, and returned no more during the whole day. His father continually chastised him, yet still Aladdin remained incorrigible; and Mustafa, to his great sorrow, was obliged to abandon him to his idle vagabond kind of life. This conduct of his son gave him great pain, and the vexation of not being able to induce him to pursue a proper and reputable course of life, brought on so obstinate and fatal an illness, that at the end of a few months it put an end to his existence.

As Aladdin's mother saw that her son would never follow the trade of his father, she shut up his shop, and converted all his stock and implements of trade into money, upon which, added to what she could earn by spinning cotton, she and her son subsisted.

Aladdin, no longer restrained by the dread of his father, and so regardless of his mother's advice that he even threatened her whenever she attempted to remonstrate with him, now gave himself completely up to a life of indolence and licentiousness. He continued to associate with persons of his own age, and was fonder than ever of entering into all their tricks and fun. He pursued this course of life till he was fifteen years old, without showing the least spark of understanding of any sort, and without making the least reflection upon what was to be his future lot. He was in this state when, as he was one day playing with his companions in one of the public places, as was his usual custom, a stranger, who was going by, stopped and looked at him.

This stranger was in fact so noted and learned a magician, that he was, by distinction, called the African magician, being a native of that country, whence he had arrived only two days before.

Whether this African magician, who was well skilled in physiognomy, had remarked in the countenance of Aladdin the signs of such a disposition as was adapted to his purpose, for which he had undertaken so long a journey, or whether he had any other project, is uncertain, but he very adroitly made himself acquainted with his family, discovered who he was, and the sort of character and disposition he possessed. He was no sooner informed of what he wished to know than he went up to the young man, and taking him to a little distance from his companions, asked him if his father was not called Mustafa, and a

tailor by trade. "Yes, sir," replied Aladdin, "but he has been dead a long time."

At this speech the African magician threw his arms round Aladdin's neck, embraced and kissed him for some time, while the tears seemed to run from his eyes, and his bosom to heave with sighs. Aladdin, who observed him, asked him why he wept. "Alas, my child," replied the magician, "how can I do otherwise? I am your uncle, for your father was my most beloved brother. I have been several years upon my journey, and at the very instant of my arrival in this place, and when I was congratulating myself in the hopes of seeing him and giving him joy on my return, you inform me of his death. Must I not then feel the most violent grief when I thus find myself deprived of all my expected consolation? What however in a small degree alleviates my affliction is, that as far as my recollection carries me, I discover many traces of your father in your countenance, and I have not in fact been deceived in addressing myself to you." He then asked Aladdin where his mother lived, at the same time putting his hand into his purse; and as soon as he had received an answer, the magician gave him a handful of small money, and said to him, "My son, go to your mother, make my respects to her, and tell her that I will come and see her to-morrow if I have an opportunity, in order to afford myself the consolation of seeing the spot where my good brother lived so many years, and where he at last finished his career."

The African magician had no sooner quitted his new-created nephew than Aladdin ran to his mother, highly delighted with the money his supposed uncle had given him. "Pray tell me, mother," he cried, the instant of his arrival, "whether I have not an uncle." "No, my child," replied she, "you have no uncle, either on your poor father's side or mine." "I have, however, just left a man," answered the boy, "who told me he was my father's brother and my uncle. He even cried and embraced me when I told him of my father's death. And to prove to you that he spoke the truth," added he, showing her the money which he had received, "see what he has given me. He bid me also be sure and give his kindest remembrances to you, and to say, that he would, if he had time, come and see you himself to-morrow, as he was very desirous of beholding the house where my father lived and died." "It is true, indeed, my son," replied Aladdin's mother, "that your father had a brother, but he has been dead a long time, and I never heard him even mention any other." After this conversation they said no more on the subject.

The next day the African magician again accosted Aladdin while he was playing in some other part of the city with three other boys. He embraced him as before, and putting two pieces of gold in his hand, "Take this, my boy," said he, "and carry it to your mother. Tell her that I intend to come and sup with her this evening, and that this is for her to purchase what is necessary for us to regale ourselves with; but first inform me in what quarter of the city I shall find your house." Aladdin gave him the necessary information, and the magician took his departure.

Aladdin carried the two pieces of gold to his mother, and when he had told her of his supposed uncle's intentions, she went out and procured a large supply of good provisions. And as she was unprovided with a sufficient quantity of china or earthenware, she went and borrowed what she might want of her neighbours. She was busily employed during the whole day in preparing for night; and in the evening when everything was ready, she desired Aladdin, as his uncle might not know where to find the house, to go out into the street, and if he should see him, to show him the way.

Although Aladdin had pointed out to the magician the exact situation of his mother's house, he was nevertheless very ready to go, and at the very moment

that he was at the door he heard some person knock. Aladdin instantly opened it, and saw the African bringing several bottles of wine in his hand, and different sorts of fruit for them to regale with.

He had no sooner given to Aladdin all the things that he had brought than he paid his respects to his mother, and requested her to show him the place where his brother Mustafa was accustomed to sit upon the sofa. She had no sooner pointed it out, than he immediately prostrated himself before it, kissed the place several times, while the tears seemed to run in abundance from his eyes. "My poor brother," he exclaimed, "how unfortunate am I not to have arrived time enough to receive your embraces once more before you died!" The mother of Aladdin begged this pretended brother to sit in the place her husband used to occupy, but he would by no means hear of it. "No," he cried, "give me leave to seat myself opposite, that if I am deprived of the pleasure of seeing him here in person, sitting like the father of a family that is so dear to me, I may at least look at the spot as if he were present." Aladdin's mother pressed him no further, but permitted him to take whatever seat he chose.

When the African magician had placed himself where he liked, he began to enter into conversation with Aladdin's mother. "Do not be surprised, my good sister," he said, "at never having seen me during the whole of the time you have been married to my late brother Mustafa, of happy memory. It is full forty years since I left this country, of which I am a native, as well as himself. In the course of this long period, I first travelled through India, Persia, Arabia, Syria, and Egypt; and after passing a considerable time in all the finest and most remarkable cities in those countries, I went into Africa, where I resided for a great length of time. At last, as it is the natural disposition of man, how distant soever he may be from the place of his birth, never to forget his native country, nor lose the recollection of his family, his friends, and the companions of his youth, the desire of seeing mine, and of once more embracing my dear brother, took so powerful a hold of my mind, that I felt myself sufficiently bold and strong again to undergo the fatigue of so long a journey. I instantly, therefore, set about all the necessary preparations, and began my travels. It is useless to mention the length of time I was thus employed, the various obstacles I had to encounter, and all the fatigue I suffered before I arrived at the end of my labours. Nothing, however, so much mortified me, or gave me so much pain in all my travels, as the intelligence of the death of my poor brother, whom I so tenderly loved, and whose memory I must ever regard with a respect truly fraternal. I have traced almost every feature of his countenance in the face of my nephew; and it was this that enabled me to distinguish him from the other young persons with whom he was. He can inform you in what manner I received the melancholy news that my brother no longer lived. I must, however, praise God for all things, and console myself in finding him again alive in his son, who certainly preserves his most remarkable features."

The African magician, who perceived that Aladdin's mother was very much affected at this conversation about her husband, and that the recollection of him renewed her grief, changed the subject, and turning towards Aladdin, he asked him his name. "I am called Aladdin," he answered. "Well, then, Aladdin," said the magician, "what do you employ yourself about? Are you acquainted with any trade?"

At this speech Aladdin hung down his head, and was much disconcerted; but his mother seeing this, answered for him. "Aladdin," she said, "is a very idle boy. His father did all he could while he was alive to make him learn his business, but he could not accomplish it; and since his death, in spite of everything I can say, he will learn nothing, but leads the idle life of

a vagabond, though I talk to him on the subject every day of my life. He spends all his time at play with other boys, as you saw him, without considering that he is no longer a child : and if you cannot make him ashamed of himself, and induce him to profit by your advice, I shall utterly despair that he will ever be good for anything. He knows very well that his father left us nothing at his death to live upon ; and sees that though I pass the whole day in spinning cotton, yet that I can hardly get bread for us to eat. In short, I am resolved soon absolutely to shut my doors against him, and make him seek a livelihood somewhere else."

In saying this, the good woman burst into tears. "This is not right, Aladdin," said the African magician ; "you must, nephew, think of supporting yourself, and working for your bread. There is a variety of trades ; consider if there be not any one you have an inclination for in preference to another. Perhaps that which your father followed displeases you, and you would rather be brought up to some other. Come, come, don't conceal your opinion, give it freely, and I may perhaps assist you." As he found that Aladdin made him no answer, he went on thus : "If you have an objection against learning any trade, and yet wish to be a respectable and honest character, I will procure you a shop, and furnish it with rich stuffs and fine sorts of linens ; you shall sell the goods, and with the money that you make you shall buy other merchandise ; and in this manner you will pass your life very respectably. Consult your own inclinations, and tell me candidly what you think of the plan. You will always find me ready to perform my promise."

This offer flattered the vanity of Aladdin very much ; and he was the more averse to any manual occupation, because he knew well enough that the shops which contained goods of this sort were much frequented, and the merchants themselves well dressed and highly esteemed. He hinted, therefore, to the African magician, whom he considered as his uncle, that he was much more inclined to the latter plan, and that he should all his life continue sensible of the obligation he was under to him. "Since, then, this employment is agreeable to you," replied the magician, "I will take you with me to-morrow, and have you properly and handsomely dressed as becomes one of the richest merchants of this city, and then we will procure a shop in the way I propose."

The mother of Aladdin, who till now had not been convinced that the magician was in fact the brother of her husband, no longer doubted it, after all the good he promised to do for her son. She thanked him most sincerely for his kind intentions, and charging Aladdin to conduct himself so as to prove worthy of the good fortune his uncle had led him to expect, she served up the supper. The conversation during the whole of the supper turned on the same subject, and continued till the magician, perceiving that the night was far advanced, took leave of Aladdin and his mother, and retired.

The African magician did not fail to return the next morning to the widow of Mustafa the tailor, as he had promised. He took Aladdin away with him, and conducted him to a merchant's, where ready-made clothes, suited to every description of people, and made of the finest stuffs, were sold. He made Aladdin try on such as seemed to fit him, and after choosing those he liked best, and rejecting others that he thought improper for him, "My nephew," said he, "choose such as you are most pleased with out of this number." Delighted with the liberality of his new uncle, Aladdin made choice of one. The magician bought it, together with everything that was necessary to complete the dress, and paid for the whole, without asking the merchant to make any abatement.

When Aladdin saw himself thus magnificently dressed from head to foot, he returned his uncle a thousand thanks ; the magician, on his part, again pro-

promised never to forsake him, but to have him always with him. He then conducted Aladdin to the most frequented parts of the city, particularly where the shops of the most opulent merchants were; and when he was come to the street where the shops of fine stuffs and linens were, he said to Aladdin, "You will soon become a merchant such as one of these. It is proper that you should frequent this place, and become acquainted with them." After this he carried him to the largest and most noted mosques, to the khans, where the foreign merchants lived, and through every part of the sultan's palace where he had leave to enter. Having at length gone with him over every part of the city most worth seeing, they came to the khan where the magician had hired an apartment. They found several merchants, with whom he had made some slight acquaintance since his arrival, and whom he had now invited to partake of a repast, in order to introduce his pretended nephew to them.

The entertainment was not over till the evening. Aladdin then wished to take leave of his uncle, and go home; the African magician, however, would not suffer him to go alone, but went himself, and conducted him back to his mother's. When she saw her son so handsomely dressed, she was transported with joy. She continued to bestow a thousand blessings on the magician, who had been at so great an expense on her dear child's account. "Generous relation," she exclaimed, "I know not how to thank you enough for your great liberality. My son, I am aware, is not worthy of so much generosity; and he will be wicked indeed if he ever proves ungrateful to you, or does not conduct himself so as to deserve and be an ornament to the excellent situation in which you are about to place him. For my part," added she, "I thank you with my whole soul; may you live many happy years, and witness my son's gratitude, who cannot prove his good intentions better than by following your advice."

"Aladdin," replied the magician, "is a good boy. He seems to pay attention to what I say. I have no doubt but we shall make him what we wish. I am sorry for one thing, and that is, that I am not able to perform all my promises to-morrow. It is Friday, and on that day all the shops are shut; and it is impossible either to hire one, or furnish it with goods, because all the merchants are absent, and engaged in their several amusements. We will, however, settle all this business on Saturday; and I will come here to-morrow to take Aladdin, and show him the public gardens in which people of reputation constantly walk and amuse themselves. He has probably hitherto been ignorant of the way in which they pass their time there.' He has associated only with boys, but he must now learn to live with men." The magician then took his leave and departed. In the mean time Aladdin, who was delighted at seeing himself so well dressed, was still more pleased at the idea of going to the gardens in the suburbs of the city. He had never been without the gates, nor seen the neighbouring country, which was in fact very beautiful and attractive.

The next morning Aladdin got up and dressed himself very early, in order to be ready to set out the moment his uncle called for him. After waiting some time, and which he thought an age, he became so impatient that he opened the door and stood on the outside to watch for his arrival. The moment he saw him coming, he went to inform his mother of it, took leave of her, shut the door, and ran to meet him.

The magician behaved in the most affectionate manner to Aladdin. "Come, my good boy," said he, with a smile, "I will to-day show you some very fine things." He conducted him out at a gate that led to some large and handsome houses, or rather magnificent palaces, to each of which there was a beautiful garden, in which they had the liberty of walking. At each palace they came

to, he asked Aladdin if it were not very beautiful; while the latter often prevented this question, by exclaiming, when a new one presented itself, "O uncle, here is one much more beautiful than those we have before seen." In the mean time they kept going on into the country, and the cunning magician, who wanted to go still farther, for the purpose of putting a design which he had in his head, into execution, went into one of these gardens and sat down by the side of a large basin of pure water, which received its supplies through the jaws of a bronze lion. He then pretended to be very tired, in order to give Aladdin an opportunity of resting. "My dear nephew," he said, "you must be fatigued as well as myself. Let us rest ourselves here a little while, and get fresh strength to pursue our walk."

When they were seated, the magician took out from a piece of linen cloth, which was attached to his girdle, various sorts of fruits, and some cakes, with which he had provided himself; he then spread them all on the bank before them. He divided a cake between himself and Aladdin, and gave him leave to eat whatever fruit he liked best. While they were eating, he gave his pretended nephew much good advice, desiring him to leave off playing with boys, and to associate with intelligent and prudent men, to pay every attention to them, and to profit from their conversation. "You will very soon," said he, "be a man yourself, and you cannot too soon accustom yourself to their manner and behaviour." When they had finished their slight repast, they got up, and pursued their way by the side of gardens, which were separated from each other by a small foss, that served chiefly to mark the limits of each, and not to prevent the communication between them. The honesty and good understanding of the inhabitants of this city, made it unnecessary for them to take any other means of preventing any injury from being done to each other. The African magician insensibly led Aladdin on much farther than the gardens extended; and they walked on through the country till they came into the neighbourhood of the mountains.

Aladdin, who had never in his whole life before taken so long a walk, felt himself very much tired. "Where are we going, my dear uncle?" said he. "We have got much farther than the gardens, and I can see nothing but hills and mountains before us. And if we go on any farther, I know not whether I shall have strength enough to walk back to the city." "Take courage, nephew," replied his pretended uncle; "I wish to show you another garden that far surpasses all you have hitherto seen. It is not far from hence; and after your arrival you will readily own how sorry you would have been to have come thus near it and not gone on to see it." Aladdin was persuaded to proceed, and the magician led him on considerably farther, amusing him all the time with entertaining stories to beguile the way, and make it less fatiguing and unpleasant.

They at length came to a narrow valley, situated between two moderately-sized mountains, of nearly the same height. This was the particular spot to which the magician wished to bring Aladdin, in order to put into execution the grand project that was the sole cause of his coming from the extremity of Africa to China. "We shall now," said he to Aladdin, "go no farther, and I shall here unfold to your view some extraordinary things, hitherto unknown to mortals; and when you shall have seen, you will thank me a thousand times for having made you an eye-witness of. They are indeed such wonders as no one besides yourself will ever have seen. I am now going to strike a light, and do you, in the mean time, collect all the dry sticks and leaves that you can find, in order to make a fire."

There were so many pieces of dry sticks scattered about this place, that Aladdin very soon collected more than was sufficient for his purpose by the

time the magician had lighted his match. He then set them on fire ; and as soon as they were in a blaze, the African threw a certain perfume which he had ready in his hand upon them. A thick and dense smoke immediately arose, which seemed to unfold itself in consequence of some mysterious words pronounced by the magician, but which Aladdin did not in the least comprehend. At the same instant the ground slightly shook, and opening in the spot where they stood, discovered a square stone of about a foot and a half across, placed horizontally, with a brass ring fixed in the centre for the purpose of lifting it up.

Aladdin was dreadfully alarmed at all these things, and was about to run away, when the magician, to whom his presence was absolutely necessary in this mysterious affair, stopped him in an angry manner, giving him, at the same moment, a blow so violent as to beat him down, and very nearly knocked some of his teeth out, as it appeared from the blood that ran from his mouth. Poor Aladdin, with tears in his eyes, and trembling in every limb, got up. "My dear uncle," he cried, "what have I done to deserve so severe a blow?" "I have my reasons for it," replied the magician ; "I am your uncle, and consider myself as your father, and you ought not to make me any answer. Do not, however, my boy," added he, in a milder tone of voice, "be at all afraid ; I desire nothing of you but to obey me most implicitly : and this you must do if you wish to render yourself worthy of, and to profit by, the great advantages I mean to afford you." These fine speeches of the magician in some measure lessened the fright of Aladdin ; and when the former saw him less alarmed, "You have observed," he said, "what I have done by virtue of my perfumes, and the words that I pronounced. You are now to be informed that, under the stone which you see here, there is a concealed treasure that is destined for you, and which will one day render you richer than any of the most powerful potentates of the earth. It is moreover the fact, that no one in the whole world but you can be permitted to touch, or lift up this stone, and go beneath it. Even I myself am not able to approach it, and to take possession of the treasure which is under it. And in order to ensure your success, you must observe and execute in every respect, even to the minutest point, what I am now going to instruct you in. This is a matter of the greatest consequence both to you and to myself."

Wrapped in astonishment at everything he had seen and heard, and full of the idea of this treasure which the magician said was to make him for ever happy, Aladdin forgot everything else that had passed. "Well, my dear uncle," he exclaimed, "what must I do? Tell me : I am ready to obey you in everything." "I heartily rejoice, my boy," replied the magician, embracing Aladdin, "that you have made so good a resolution. Come to me ; take hold of this ring and lift up the stone." "I am not strong enough, uncle," said Aladdin : "you must help me." "No, no," answered the African magician, "you have no occasion for my assistance ; we shall neither of us do any good if I attempt to help you ; you must lift it up entirely by yourself. Pronounce only the name of your father and your grandfather, take hold of the ring and lift it : it will come without any difficulty." Aladdin did exactly as the magician told him ; he raised the stone without any trouble, and laid it by the side of him.

When the stone was taken away, a small excavation was visible, between three and four feet deep, at the bottom of which there appeared a small door, with steps to go down still lower. "You must now, my good boy," said the African magician to Aladdin, "observe very exactly everything that I am going to tell you. Go down into this cavern, and when you have come to the bottom of the steps which you see, you will perceive an open door, which leads into a

large vaulted space, that is divided into three successive halls. In each of these you will see, on both sides of you, four bronze vases, as large as tubs, full of gold and silver; but you must take particular care not to touch any of it: When you get in the first hall, take up your robe and bind it round you. Then observe, and go on to the second without stopping, and from thence in the same manner to the third. Above all, mind and be very particular not to go near the walls, nor even to touch them with your robe; for if any part of your dress comes in contact, your instant death will be the inevitable consequence. This is the reason of my having desired you to fasten your robe firmly round you. At the extremity of the third, there is a door which leads to a garden planted with beautiful trees, all of which are full of fruit. Go on straight forward, and pursue a path which you will perceive, and which will bring you to the bottom of a flight of fifty steps, at the top of which there is a terrace. When you shall have ascended to the terrace, you will observe a niche before you, in which there is a lighted lamp. Take the lamp and extinguish it. Then throw out the wick, and the liquid that is within, and put it in your bosom. When you have done this, bring it to me. Do not be afraid of staining your dress, as what is within the lamp is not oil; and when you have thrown it out, the lamp will dry directly. If you should feel yourself very desirous of gathering any of the fruit in the garden, you may do so; and there is nothing to prevent your taking as much as you please."

When the magician had given these directions to Aladdin, he took off a ring which he had on one of his fingers, and put it on his pretended nephew, telling him, at the same time, that it was a preservative against every evil that might otherwise happen to him; and again bade him be mindful of everything he had said to him. "Go, my child," added he, "descend boldly; we shall now both of us become immensely rich for the rest of our lives."

Aladdin gave a spring, jumped into the opening with a willing mind, and went down to the bottom of the steps. He found the three halls exactly answering the description the magician had given of them. He passed through them with the greatest precaution possible, as he was fearful he might be killed if he did not most strictly observe all the directions he had received. He went on to the garden, and ascended to the terrace without stopping. He took the lamp, as it stood lighted in the niche, threw out its contents, and, observing that it was as the magician had said, quite dry, he put it into his bosom. He then came down the terrace, and stopped in the garden to examine the fruit, which he had only seen for an instant as he passed along. The trees of this garden were all full of the most extraordinary fruit. Each tree bore fruits of a different colour. Some were white, others sparkling and transparent, like crystal; some were red and of different shades, others green, blue, violet; some of a yellowish hue; in short, of almost every colour. The white were pearls; the sparkling and transparent were diamonds; the deep red were rubies; the paler, a particular sort of ruby called balass; the green, emeralds; the blue, turquoises; the violet, amethysts; those tinged with yellow, sapphires; in the same way, all the other coloured fruits were varieties of precious stones; and the whole of them were of the largest size, and more perfect than were ever seen in the whole world. Aladdin, who knew neither their beauty nor their value, was not at all struck with the appearance of them, which did not the least suit his taste, like the figs, grapes, and other excellent fruits, common in China. As he was not yet of an age to be acquainted with their value, he thought they were all only pieces of coloured glass, and did not therefore attach any other value to them. The variety, however, and contrast of so many beautiful colours, as well as the brilliancy and extraordinary size of each sort, nevertheless tempted him to gather some of each; and he took so many of every colour that he filled



ALADDIN AND THE WONDERFUL LAMP. Aladdin
expected came to pass ; for

both his pockets, as well as his two new purses that the magician had bought for him, at the time he made him a present of his new dress; and as his pockets, which were already full, could not hold his two purses, he fastened them on each side of his girdle, or sash, and also wrapped some in its folds, as it was of silk, and made very full. In this manner he carried them so as they could not fall out. He did not even neglect to fill his bosom quite full, between his robe and shirt.

Laden in this manner with the most immense treasure, though ignorant of its value, Aladdin made haste through the three halls, in order that he might not make the African magician wait too long. Having proceeded through them with the same caution as before, he began to ascend the steps he had come down, and presented himself at the entrance of the cave, where the magician was impatiently waiting for him. As soon as Aladdin perceived him, he called out, "Give me your hand, uncle, to help me up." "You had better, my dear boy," replied the magician, "first give me the lamp, as that will only embarrass you." "It is not at all in my way," said Aladdin, "and I will give it you when I am out." The magician still persevered in wishing to get the lamp before he helped Aladdin out of the cave; but the latter had in fact so covered it with the fruit of the trees, that he absolutely refused to give it till he had got out of the cave. The African magician was then in the greatest despair at the obstinate resistance the boy made, and put himself into the most violent rage. He then threw a little perfume upon the fire, which he had taken care to keep up, and he had hardly pronounced two magic words, before the stone, which served to shut up the entrance to the cavern, returned of its own accord to the place, with all the earth over it, exactly in the same state as it was when the magician and Aladdin first arrived there.

There is no doubt but that this African magician was not the brother of Mustafa the tailor, as he had formerly boasted, and consequently he was not the uncle of Aladdin. He was most probably born in Africa, as that is a country where magic is more studied than in any other; he had given himself up to it from his earliest youth; and after near forty years spent in enchantments, experiments in geomancy, fumigations, and reading books of magic, he at length discovered that there was in the world a certain wonderful lamp, the possession of which would make him the most powerful monarch of the universe if he were so fortunate as to obtain it. By a late experiment in geomancy, he discovered that this lamp was in a subterraneous place in the middle of China, in the very spot, and under the very circumstances that have just been detailed. Thoroughly persuaded of the truth of this discovery, he had come from the farthest part of Africa, and after a long and painful journey, had arrived in the city that was nearest to this treasure. But though the lamp was certainly in the place which he had found out, yet he was nevertheless not permitted to take it away himself, nor to go in person to the very spot where it was. It was absolutely necessary that another person should go down to take it, and then put it into his hands. It was, therefore, for this reason that he had addressed himself to Aladdin, who seemed to him to be an artless youth, and well adapted to perform the service he expected from him; and he had resolved as soon as he had got the lamp from him, to raise the last fumigation, pronounce the two magic words which produced the effect already seen, and sacrifice poor Aladdin to his avarice and wickedness, that he might not have any existing witness of his being in possession of the lamp. The blow he had given Aladdin, as well as the authority he exercised over him, were only for the purpose of accustoming him to fear him, and obey all his orders without hesitation, that when Aladdin had got possession of the wonderful lamp, he might instantly deliver it to him. The reverse, however, of what he both wished and expected came to pass; for

he was in such haste to put an end to poor Aladdin, only because he was afraid that while he was contesting the matter with him, some person might come and make that public which he wished to be quite secret, that he completely failed in his object.

When the magician found all his hopes and expectations for ever blasted, he had only one method to pursue, and that was to return to Africa, which in fact he did the very same day. He pursued his journey along the most private roads, in order to avoid the city, where he had met with Aladdin. He was also afraid to meet with any person who might have seen him walk out with him, and come back without him.

To judge from all these circumstances, it might naturally be supposed that Aladdin was gone for ever; and indeed the magician himself, who thought he had thus destroyed him, had not paid any attention to the ring which he had placed on his finger, and which was now about to render Aladdin the most essential service and to save his life. Aladdin knew not the wonderful qualities either of that or the lamp; and it is indeed astonishing that the loss of both of them did not drive the magician to absolute despair; but persons of his profession are so accustomed to defeat, and have so many events happen quite contrary to their wishes, that they never cease from endeavouring to conquer every misfortune by charms, visions, and enchantments.

Aladdin, who did not expect this wicked action from his pretended uncle, after all the kindness and generosity with which the latter had behaved to him, experienced a degree of surprise and astonishment, which is much easier to conceive than describe. When he found himself as it were buried alive, he called aloud a thousand times to his uncle, telling him he was ready to give him the lamp. But all his cries were useless, and having no other means of making himself heard, he remained in perfect darkness. His tears having at length ceased, he went down to the bottom of the flight of stairs, intending to go towards the light in the garden, where he had before been. But the walls, which had been opened by enchantment, were now shut by the same means. He felt all around him to the right and left several times, but could not discover the least opening. He then redoubled his cries and tears, sat down upon the step of his dungeon, without the least ray of hope ever again to see the light of day, and with the melancholy conviction that he should only pass from the darkness he now was in, to the shades of an inevitable and speedy death.

Aladdin remained two days in this state, without either eating or drinking. On the third day, regarding his death as certain, he lifted up his hands, and joining them, as in the act of prayer, he wholly resigned himself to the will of God, and uttered in a loud tone of voice, "There is no strength or power but in the high and great God." In this action of joining his hands, he happened, without thinking of it, to rub the ring which the African magician had put upon his finger, and of the virtue of which he was as yet ignorant. Upon its being thus rubbed, a Genius of a most enormous figure, and a most horrid countenance, instantly rose as it were out of the earth before him; he was so tall, that his head touched the vaulted roof, and he addressed these words to Aladdin: "What do you wish? I am ready to obey you as your slave; as the slave of him who has the ring on his finger, both I and the other slaves of the ring."

At any other moment, and on any other occasion, Aladdin, who was totally unaccustomed to such appearances, would have been so frightened at the sight of such a wonderful figure, that he would have been unable to speak; but he was so entirely taken up with the danger and peril of his situation, that he answered without the least hesitation, "Whoever you are, take me, if you are able, out of this place." He had scarcely pronounced these words, when the

earth opened, and he found himself on the outside of the cave, and at the very spot to which the magician had brought him. It is easy to be conceived, that after having remained in complete darkness for so long a time, Aladdin had at first some difficulty in supporting the brightness of open day. By degrees, however, his eyes were accustomed to the light, and in looking round him, he was surprised to find not the least opening in the earth. He could not comprehend in what manner he had so suddenly come out of it. There was only the place where the fire had been made, which he recollected was close to the entrance into the cave. Looking round towards the city, he perceived it surrounded by the gardens, and thus knew the road he had come with the magician. He returned the same way, thanking God for having again suffered him to behold and revisit the face of the earth, which he had quite despaired of doing. He arrived at the city, but it was with great difficulty that he got home. When he was within the door, the joy he experienced of again seeing his mother, added to the weak state he was in, from not having eaten anything for the space of three days, made him faint; and it was some time before he came to himself. His mother, who had already wept for him as lost or dead, seeing him in this state, did not omit anything that could tend to restore him to life. At length he recovered, and the first thing he said to her was, "Bring me something, my dear mother, to eat, before you do anything else. I have tasted nothing these three days." His mother instantly set what she had before him. "My dear child," said she at the same moment, "do not hurry yourself; it is dangerous; eat also but little, and at your leisure: you must take great care how you manage in the pressing appetite you have. Do not even speak to me; you will have plenty of time to relate to me everything that has happened to you, when you shall have regained your strength. I am sufficiently satisfied at seeing you once more, after all the affliction I have suffered since Friday; and all the trouble I have also taken to learn what was become of you, when I found the night approach, and you did not return home."

Aladdin followed his mother's advice; he eat slowly, and not a great deal, and drank only in proportion. "I have great reason, my dear mother," said he, when he had done, "to complain of you for putting me in the power of a man whose object was to destroy me, and who at this very moment supposes my death so sure, that he cannot doubt either that I am no longer alive, or at least that I shall not remain so another day. But you took him to be my uncle, and I was also equally deceived. Indeed, how could we suppose him to be anything else, as he almost overwhelmed me with his kindness and generosity, and made me so many promises of future advantage. But I must tell you, mother, that he was a traitor, a wicked man, a cheat. He was so good and kind to me only that he might, after answering his own purpose, destroy me, as I have already told you, without either of us being able to know the reason. For my part, I can assure you, I have not given him the least cause for the bad treatment I have received; and you will yourself be convinced of it by the faithful and true account I am going to give you of everything that has passed from the first moment that I left you till he put his wicked design in execution."

Aladdin then related to his mother everything that had happened since he left home with the magician, omitting no circumstance of what passed, or what he had seen in going backwards and forwards through the three halls, in the garden, and on the terrace, whence he had taken the wonderful lamp, which he now took out of his bosom and showed to his mother, as well as the transparent and different-coloured fruits that he had gathered as he returned through the garden, and the two purses, quite full, all of which he gave his mother, who did not however set much value upon them. The fruits were in fact precious

stones ; and the lustre which they threw around by means of a lamp that hung in the chamber, and which almost equalled that of the sun, ought to have informed her that they were of the greatest value ; but the mother of Aladdin had no greater knowledge of this than her son. She had been brought up in a humble situation in life, and had never seen any jewels among her relations or neighbours ; it was therefore not at all surprising if she considered them as things only fit to please the eye by the variety of their colours. Aladdin, therefore, put them all behind one of the cushions of the sofa on which they were sitting.

He finished the recital of his adventure by telling her, that when he came back and presented himself at the mouth of the cave to get out, upon refusing to give the lamp to the magician, the entrance of the cave was instantly closed by means of the perfume that the magician threw on the fire which he had kept alight, and of some words that he pronounced. He could not then proceed any further without shedding tears as he represented the miserable state in which he found himself buried, as it were, alive in this fatal cave, till the moment he got out and was again brought forth into the world by means of the ring, of which he did not even now know the virtues. When he had finished his account, he said to his mother, "I need not tell you more, the rest is known to you. This is the whole of my adventures and of the danger I have been in since I left you."

Wonderful as this relation was, distressing too as it must have been for a mother who, in spite of his defects, tenderly loved her son, she had the patience to hear it to the end without giving him the least interruption. In the most affecting parts, however, particularly those that unfolded the wicked intentions of the African magician, she could not help showing by her actions how much she detested him, and how much he excited her indignation. But Aladdin had no sooner concluded than she began to abuse this impostor in the strongest terms. She called him a traitor, a barbarian, a cheat, an assassin, a magician, the enemy and destroyer of the human race. "Yes, my child," she exclaimed, "he is a magician, and magicians are public evils. They hold communications with demons, by means of their sorceries and enchantments. Blessed be God that he has not suffered the wickedness of this wretch to have its full effect upon you ; your death would have been inevitable had not God come to your assistance, and had you not implored his aid." She added more things of the same sort ; but perceiving that Aladdin, who had not slept for three days, wanted rest, she made him therefore retire to bed, and soon afterwards went herself.

As Aladdin had not been able to take any repose in the subterraneous place in which he had been as it were buried with the idea of his certain destruction, it is no wonder that he passed the whole of that night in the most profound sleep, and that it was even late the next morning before he awoke. He at last got up, and the first thing he said to his mother was that he was very hungry, and that she could not oblige him more than by giving him something for breakfast. "Alas, my child," replied his mother, "I have not a morsel of bread to give you. You eat last night all the trifling remains of food in the house. Have, however, a little patience, and it shall not be long before I will bring you some. I have a little cotton of my own spinning, I will go and sell it, and purchase something for our dinner." "Keep your cotton, mother," said Aladdin, "for another time, and give me the lamp which I brought with me yesterday. I will go and sell that, and the money it will fetch will serve us for breakfast and dinner too, nay, perhaps also for supper."

Aladdin's mother took the lamp from the place she had put it in. "Here it is," she said to her son, "but it is I think very dirty ; if I were to clean it a little, perhaps it might sell for something more." She then took some water

and a little fine sand to clean it with. But she had scarcely begun to rub this lamp when instantly, and while her son was present, a hideous and gigantic Genius rose out of the ground before her, and cried with a voice as loud as thunder, "What do you wish? I am ready to obey you as your slave, and the slave of those who have the lamp in their hands, both I and the other slaves of the lamp." The mother of Aladdin was not in a condition to answer this address. She was unable to endure the sight of a figure so hideous and alarming; and her fears were so great, that he had no sooner begun to speak than she fell down in a fainting fit.

As Aladdin had once before seen a similar appearance in the cavern, he did not either lose his presence of mind or his judgment. Seizing the lamp, he answered in a firm tone of voice, "I am hungry, bring me something to eat." The Genius disappeared, and returned the moment after with a large silver basin, which he carried on his head, and twelve covered dishes of the same material filled with the nicest meats, properly arranged, and six loaves as white as snow upon as many plates; two bottles of the most excellent wine, and two silver cups in his hand. He placed them all upon the sofa and instantly vanished.

All this passed in so short a time that Aladdin's mother had not recovered from fainting before the Genius had disappeared the second time. Aladdin, who had before thrown some water over her without any effect, again endeavoured to bring her to herself; but at the very instant he was going to set about it, whether her scattered spirits returned of themselves, or that the smell of the dishes which the Genius had brought produced the effect, she quite recovered. "My dear mother," cried Aladdin, "there is nothing the matter. Get up, and come and eat; here is what will put you in good spirits again, and at the same time satisfy my violent appetite. Come, do not let us suffer these good things to get cold before we begin."

His mother was extremely astonished when she beheld the large basin, the twelve dishes, the six loaves, the two bottles of wine, and two cups, and perceived the delicious odour that exhaled from them. "My child," she said, "how came all this abundance here, and to whom are we obliged for such liberality? Surely, the sultan cannot have been acquainted with our poverty, and taken compassion upon us?" "My good mother," replied Aladdin, "come and sit down, and begin to eat; you are as much in want of something as I am. I will tell you of everything, when we have broken our fast." They then sat down, and both of them ate with the greater appetite, as neither mother nor son had ever before seen a table so well covered.

During the repast, the mother of Aladdin could not help stopping frequently to look at and admire the basin and dishes; although she was not quite sure whether they were silver or any other metal, so little was she accustomed to things of this sort; nor, indeed, was her son better informed than herself. Although they both merely intended to make a simple breakfast, yet they sat so long, that the hour of dining came before they had risen; the dishes were so excellent that they almost increased their appetites; and as they were still hot, they thought it no bad plan to join the two meals together, and therefore they dined before they got up from breakfast. When they had made an end of their double repast, they found enough remaining not only for supper, but even for two as good meals the next day as they had just made.

When Aladdin's mother had taken away the things, and put aside what they had not consumed, she came and seated herself on the sofa near her son. "I am now waiting, my boy," she said, "for you to satisfy my impatient curiosity, and to hear the account you have promised me." Aladdin then related to her everything that had passed between him and the Genius, from the time her

alarm made her faint till she again came to herself. At this discourse of her son, and the account of the appearance of the Genius, his mother was in the greatest astonishment. "But what do you tell me, child, about your Genius? Never since I was born have I heard of any person of my acquaintance that has seen one. How comes it, then, that this villanous Genius should have presented himself to me? Why did he not rather address himself to you, to whom he had before appeared in the subterraneous cavern?"

"Mother," replied Aladdin, "the Genius who appeared just now to you, is not the same that appeared to me. In some things, indeed, they resemble each other, being both as large as giants; but they are very different, both in their countenance and dress, and they belong to different masters. If you recollect, he whom I saw called himself the slave of the ring, which I had on my finger; and the one who appeared to you was the slave of the lamp, which you had in your hand; but I believe you did not hear him, as you seemed to faint the instant he began to speak." "What," cried his mother, "is it then your lamp that was the reason why this cursed Genius addressed himself to me rather than to you? Ah, child, take the lamp out of my sight, and put it where you please, so that I never touch it again. Indeed, I would rather that you should throw it away or sell it, than run the risk of almost dying with fright by again touching it. And if you would also follow my advice, you would put away the ring as well. We ought to have no commerce with Genii; they are demons, and our prophet has told us so."

"With your permission, however, my dear mother," replied Aladdin, "I shall take care how I sell this lamp in a hurry, which has already been so useful to us both. I have, indeed, been once very near it. Do you not see what it has procured us, and that it will also continue to furnish us with enough for our entire support? You may easily judge, as well as myself, that it was not for nothing that my pretended wicked uncle gave himself so much trouble, and undertook so long and fatiguing a journey, since it was merely to get possession of this wonderful lamp, which he preferred to all the gold and silver, which he knew was in the three halls, and which I myself saw, as he had before said I should. He was too well acquainted with the worth and qualities of this lamp to wish for any other part of that immense treasure. And since chance then has discovered its virtues to us, let us profit by them, but in such a manner that we shall not make any bustle, and by such means draw down the envy and jealousy of our neighbours. I will take it indeed out of your sight, and put it where I shall be able to find it whenever I shall have occasion for it, since you are so much alarmed at the appearance of Genii. Nor can I either resolve to throw the ring away. Without this ring you would have never beheld me again; and even if I should now have been alive, it would have been almost the last moment of my existence. You must permit me, then, to keep and wear it always very carefully on my finger. Who can tell if some danger may not some time or other again happen to me, which neither you nor I can now foresee, and from which it may deliver me?" As the arguments of Aladdin appeared very just and reasonable, his mother had nothing to say in reply. "Do as you like, my son," she cried; "as for me, I wish to have nothing at all to do with Genii; and I declare to you, that I entirely wash my hands of them, and will never mention them to you again."

After supper the next evening, nothing remained of the provisions which the Genius had brought. The following morning, Aladdin, who did not like to wait till hunger compelled him, took one of the silver plates under his robe and went out early, in order to sell it. He addressed himself to a Jew whom he happened to meet. Aladdin took him aside, and showing him the plate, asked him if he would buy it.

The Jew, who was both clever and cunning, took the plate and examined it. He had no sooner seen that it was good silver, than he desired to know how much he expected for it. Aladdin, who knew not its value, nor had ever had any dealings of the sort before, was satisfied with saying, that he supposed the Jew knew what the plate was worth, and that he would depend upon his honour. Being uncertain whether Aladdin was acquainted with its real value or not, he took out of his purse a piece of gold, which was exactly worth one seventy-second part the value of the plate, and offered it to Aladdin. The latter eagerly took the money, and as soon as he had got it, went away so quickly that the Jew, not satisfied with the exorbitant profit he had made by this bargain, was very sorry he had not foreseen Aladdin's ignorance of the value of the plate which he had brought to sell, and in consequence offered him much less for it. He was upon the point of running after the young man, to get something back from him out of the piece of gold he had given him; but Aladdin himself ran very fast, and had already got so far that he would have found it impossible to overtake him.

In his way home, Aladdin stopped at a baker's shop, where he bought enough bread for his mother and himself, which he paid for out of his piece of gold, and received the change. When he got back he gave what remained to his mother, who went to the market and purchased as much provision as would last them for several days.

They thus continued to live in an economical manner, that is, till Aladdin had sold all the twelve dishes, one after the other, to the same Jew, exactly as he had done the first, when they found they wanted more money. The Jew, who had given him a piece of gold for the first, durst not offer him less for the other dishes, for fear of losing so good a bargain. He bought them all, therefore, at the same rate. When the money for the last plate was expended, Aladdin had recourse to the basin, which was at least ten times as heavy as any of the others. He wished to carry this to his usual merchant, but its great weight prevented him; he was obliged, therefore, to go and look for the Jew, and bring him to his mother's. After having examined the weight of the basin, the Jew counted out ten pieces of gold, with which Aladdin was satisfied.

While these ten pieces lasted, they were employed in the daily expense of the house. In the mean time Aladdin, thus accustomed to lead a sort of idle life, abstained from going to play with other boys of his own age, from the time of his adventure with the African magician. He now passed his days in walking about, or conversing with such men as he got acquainted with. Sometimes he stopped in the shops belonging to large and extensive merchants, where he listened to the conversation of such people of distinction and education as came there, and who made these shops a sort of place to meet at. The information he thus got gave him a slight knowledge of the world.

When nothing remained of his ten pieces of gold, Aladdin had recourse to the lamp. He took it up, and looked for the particular spot that his mother had rubbed. As he easily perceived the place where the sand had touched it, he applied his hand to the same place, and the same Genius whom he had before seen, instantly appeared. But as Aladdin had rubbed the lamp in a more gentle manner than his mother had done, the Genius spoke to him also in a more softened tone. "What do you wish?" said he to him, in the same words as before: "I am ready to obey you as your slave, and the slave of those who have the lamp in their hands; both I, and the other slaves of the lamp." "I am hungry," cried Aladdin; "bring me something to eat." The Genius disappeared, and in a short time returned loaded with a similar service to that he had brought before. He placed it upon the sofa, and vanished in an instant.

As Aladdin's mother was aware of the intention of her son, she had gone out on some business, that she might not even be in the house when the Genius again made his appearance. She soon after came in, and saw the table and sideboard well set out; nor was she less surprised at the effect of the lamp this time than she had been the first. Aladdin and his mother immediately placed themselves at the table; and there still remained, after they had finished their repast, sufficient food to last them two whole days.

When Aladdin again found that all his provisions were gone, and that he had no money to purchase any, he took one of the silver dishes, and went to look for the Jew whom he was before acquainted with, in order to sell it. As he walked along he happened to pass a goldsmith's shop, belonging to a respectable old man, whose probity and general honesty were unimpeachable. The goldsmith, who perceived him, called to him to come into the shop. "My son," said he, "I have often seen you pass, loaded as you are at present, and join such a Jew; and then in a short time come back again empty-handed. I have thought that you went and sold him what you carried. But perhaps you are ignorant that this Jew is a very great cheat; nay, that he will even deceive his own brethren; and that no one who knows him will have any dealings with him. Now, what I have more to say to you, is only this; and I wish you to act exactly as you like in the matter: if you will show me what you are now carrying, and are going to sell it, I will faithfully give you what it is worth, if it be anything in my way of business; if not, I will introduce you to other merchants, who will not deceive you."

The hopes of making a little more of his silver dish induced Aladdin to take it out from under his robe and show it to the goldsmith. The old man, who knew at first sight that the dish was of the finest silver, asked him if he had sold any like this to the Jew, and how much he had received for them. Aladdin ingenuously told him that he had sold twelve, and that the Jew had given him a piece of gold for each. "Ah! the thief," cried the merchant; "but, my son, what is done cannot be undone, and let us therefore think of it no more; but in letting you see what your dish, which is made of the finest silver that we ever use in our shops, is really worth, we shall know to what extent the Jew has cheated you."

The goldsmith took his scales, weighed the dish, and after explaining to Aladdin how much a mark of silver was, what it was worth, and the different divisions of it, he made him observe that, according to the weight of the dish, it was worth seventy-two-pieces of gold, which he immediately counted out to him. "This," said he, "is the exact value of your dish; if you doubt it, you may go to any one of our goldsmiths you please; and if you find that he will give you any more for it, I promise to forfeit to you double the sum. All we get is by the fashion or workmanship of the goods we buy in this manner, and this is more than even the most equitable Jews can say." Aladdin thanked the goldsmith for the beneficial advice he had given him, and for the future he carried his dishes to no one else. He also took the basin to this shop, and always received the value according to its weight.

Although Aladdin and his mother had an inexhaustible source for money in their lamp, by which they could procure what they wished, and whenever they wanted anything, they nevertheless continued always to live with the same frugality as before, except that Aladdin put a little apart for some innocent amusements, and to procure some things that were necessary in the house. His mother took the care of her dress upon herself, and supplied it from the cotton she spun. From such a quiet mode of living, it is easy to conjecture how long the money arising from the sale of the twelve dishes and the basin at the rate Aladdin had sold them at, must have lasted them. They lived in this manner

for some years, with the profitable assistance which Aladdin occasionally procured from the lamp.

During this interval, Aladdin did not fail to resort frequently to those places where persons of distinction were to be met with, such as the shops of the most considerable merchants in gold and silver stuffs, in silks, fine linens, and jewellery; and by sometimes taking a part in their conversation, he insensibly acquired the style and manners of the best company. It was at the jewellers more particularly that he became undeceived in the idea he had formed, that the transparent fruits he had gathered in the garden which contained the lamp were only coloured glass, and that he learnt their value to be that of jewels of inestimable price. By means of observing all kinds of precious stones that were bought and sold in these shops, he acquired a knowledge of their value; and as he did not see any that could be compared with those he possessed either in brilliancy or in size, he concluded that, instead of bits of common glass which he had considered as trifles of no worth, he was in fact possessed of a most invaluable treasure. He had, however, the prudence not to mention it to any one, not even to his mother; and there is no doubt that it was in consequence of his silence, that he afterwards rose to the great good fortune to which we shall in the end see him elevated.

One day, as he was walking in the city, Aladdin heard a proclamation of the sultan, ordering all persons to shut up their shops and retire into their houses until the princess Badroulboudour, the daughter of the sultan, had passed by in her way to the bath, and had again returned.

This public order created in Aladdin a curiosity to see the princess unveiled; but this he could not accomplish but by going to some house where he was acquainted, and by looking through the lattices. This, however, by no means satisfied him, because the princess usually wore a veil as she went to the bath. He thought at last of a plan, which by its success completely gratified his curiosity. He went and placed himself behind the door of the bath, which was so constructed that he could not fail of seeing her face.

Aladdin did not wait long in his place of concealment before the princess made her appearance, and he saw her through a crevice perfectly well without being at all seen. She was accompanied by a great crowd of females and eunuchs, who walked on each side of her, and others who followed her. When she had come within three or four paces of the door of the bath, she lifted up the veil, which not only concealed her face but encumbered her, and thus gave Aladdin an opportunity of seeing her quite at his ease as she approached the door.

Till this moment, Aladdin had never seen any other female without her veil except his mother, who was rather old, and who, even in her youth, had not possessed any beauty, and was therefore incapable of forming any comparison on the beauty of women. He had indeed heard that there were some females who were possessed of a most surprising beauty, but the expressions people use in commenting upon beauty never make the same impression which the examples themselves afford.

Aladdin had no sooner beheld the princess Badroulboudour than he forgot that he had ever supposed that all women were similar to his mother. His opinions were now very different, and his heart could not help surrendering itself to the object whose appearance had so charmed him. This princess was in fact the most beautiful brunette that ever was seen. Her eyes were large, well placed, and full of fire; yet the expression of her countenance was sweet and modest; her nose was well proportioned and pretty; her mouth small; her lips like vermillion, and beautifully formed; in short, every feature of her face was perfectly lovely and regular. It is, therefore, by no means

wonderful that Aladdin was dazzled, and almost out of his senses, at beholding such a combination of charms, to which he had been hitherto a stranger. Besides all these perfections, the figure of this princess was elegant and her air majestic, and the sight of her alone could attract the respect that was due to her rank.

Even after she had entered the bath, Aladdin stood some time like a man distracted; retracing and impressing more strongly on his own mind the image of a person by whom he had been so charmed, and who had penetrated to the very bottom of his heart. He at last came to himself, and recollecting that the princess was gone by, and it would be perfectly useless for him to keep his station in order to see her come out, as her back would then be towards him, and she would also be veiled, he determined to quit his post and retire.

After he had got home, Aladdin was unable well to conceal his disquietude and distress from his mother. Much surprised to see him appear so melancholy, and with such an unusually confused manner, she asked him if anything had happened, or if he was not well. He gave her, however, no answer whatever, and continued sitting on the sofa in a negligent manner for a great length of time, entirely taken up with retracing in his imagination the lovely image of the princess Badroulboudour. His mother, who was employed in preparing supper, did not continue to trouble him. As soon as it was ready, she served it up close to him on the sofa, and sat down to table. Aladdin at first paid no attention to it whatever, and when he at length ate, it was in a much more sparing manner than usual; casting down his eyes all the time, and keeping such a profound silence, that his mother could not get a single word from him in answer to all the questions she put to endeavour to learn the cause of so extraordinary a change.

After supper she again wished to renew the subject, and inquire the cause of his great melancholy; but she could not make anything out of him; and he determined to go to bed, rather than afford his mother the least satisfaction.

It is not necessary to inquire how Aladdin passed the night, struck as he was with the beauty and charms of the princess Badroulboudour; but the next morning, as he was sitting upon the sofa opposite his mother, who was spinning her cotton as usual, he addressed her as follows: "I am going, mother, to break the long silence I have kept since my return from the city yesterday morning; I am very certain, nay indeed I have perceived, that it pained you. I was not ill, as you seemed to think, nor is anything the matter with me now; yet I can assure you, that what I at this moment feel, and what I shall ever continue to feel, is much worse than any disease. I am myself ignorant of the nature of my feelings, but I have no doubt that when I have explained myself, you will understand them.

"It was not known in this quarter of the city," continued Aladdin, "and therefore you of course are ignorant of it, that the princess Badroulboudour, the daughter of our sultan, went, after dinner yesterday, to the bath; I learnt this intelligence during my walk in the city. An order was consequently published that all the shops should be shut up, and every one keep at home, that due honour and respect might be paid to the princess; and that the streets through which she had to pass might be quite clear. As I was not far from the bath at the time, the desire I felt to see the princess unveiled made me take it into my head to place myself behind the door of the bath, supposing, as indeed it happened, that she might take off her veil just before she entered it. You recollect the situation of this door, and can therefore very well judge with what ease I could obtain a full sight of her, if what I conjectured actually should take place. She did, in fact, take off her veil in going in; and I had the supreme happiness of beholding this beautiful princess. This, my dear mother,

is the true cause of the state in which you saw me yesterday, and the reason of the silence I have hitherto kept. I feel such a violent passion for this princess, that I know no terms strong enough to express it; and as my ardent desire increases every instant, I am convinced it can only be satisfied by the possession of the amiable Princess Badroulboudour, whom I have resolved to ask in marriage of the sultan."

Aladdin's mother listened with the greatest attention to the whole account of her son, till he came to the last sentence; but when she heard that it was his intention to demand the princess Badroulboudour in marriage, she could not help interrupting him with a most violent fit of laughter. Aladdin wished to resume his speech, but she prevented him. "Alas, my son," she cried, "what are you thinking of? You must surely have lost your senses to talk thus." "Mother," replied Aladdin, "I do assure you I have not lost my senses; I am perfectly in my right mind. I foresaw very well that you would reproach me with folly and extravagance, even more than you have already done; but whatever you may say, nothing will prevent me from again declaring to you that my resolution to demand the princess Badroulboudour of the sultan, her father, in marriage, is absolutely fixed."

"Truly, my son," replied his mother, very seriously, "I cannot help telling you that you seem entirely to have forgotten who you are: and even if you are determined to put this resolution in practice, I do not know who will have the audacity to make this request to the sultan." "You yourself must," answered he instantly, without the least hesitation. "I!" cried his mother, with the greatest marks of surprise, "I go to the sultan! Not I indeed; I will take care how I engage in such an enterprise. And pray, son, who do you suppose you are," she continued, "to have the impudence to aspire to the daughter of a sultan? Have you forgotten that you are the son of one of the poorest tailors in his capital, and that your mother's family cannot boast to be anything better? Are you ignorant that sultans do not deign to bestow their daughters even upon the sons of other sultans, unless they have some chance of coming to the throne?"

"My dear mother," replied Aladdin, "I have already told you that I perfectly foresaw everything you have said, and am aware of everything you can add more; but neither your reasons nor your remonstrances will in the least change my sentiments. I have told you that I would demand the princess Badroulboudour in marriage, and that you must make the request. It is a favour which I require of you, and ask with all the respect I owe to you, and I entreat you not to refuse me, unless you would rather see me die, than by granting it, give me life, as it were, a second time."

Aladdin's mother was very much embarrassed, when she saw with what obstinacy her son persisted in his mad design. "My dear son," she said, "I am your mother, and, like a good mother who has brought you into the world, I am ready to do anything that is reasonable and proper for your situation in life and my own, and to undertake anything for your sake. If this business were merely to ask the daughter of any of our neighbours, whose condition was similar to yours, I would omit nothing, but willingly employ all my abilities in the cause. And to hope for success, even in such a case, you ought to possess some little fortune, or at least to be master of some business. When poor people, like us, wish to marry, the first thing we ought to think about is how to live; while you, not to mention the lowness of your birth, and the little merit or fortune you have, at once aspire to the highest degree of fortune, and pretend to nothing less than to ask in marriage the daughter of your sovereign, who need only open his lips to blast all your designs, and destroy you at once."

"I will omit," continued Aladdin's mother, "what will be the consequences

of this business to you; you ought to reflect upon that, if you have any reason left; and I will only consider what regards me. How such an extraordinary design as that of wishing me to go and make this proposal to the sultan, that he would bestow the princess his daughter upon you, came into your head, I cannot think. Now suppose that I have, I will not say the courage, but the impudence, to go and present myself before his majesty, and make such a mad request of him, to whom should I in the first place address myself, to be introduced? Do you not suppose that the very first person I spoke to would treat me as a mad woman, and drive me back with all the indignity and abuse I should so justly merit? But even if I should overcome this difficulty, and procure an audience of the sultan, as indeed I know he readily grants it to all his subjects, when they demand it of him for the purpose of obtaining justice; and that he even grants it with pleasure, when you have to ask a favour of him, if he thinks you are worthy of it, what should I do then? Are you in either of these situations? Do you think that you deserve the favour which you wish me to ask for you? Are you worthy of it? What have you done for your prince, or for your country? How have you ever distinguished yourself? If then you have done nothing to deserve so great a favour, and if moreover you are not worthy of it, with what face can I make the demand? How can I even open my lips to propose such a thing to the sultan? His illustrious presence, and the magnificence of his whole court, will instantly stop my mouth. But there is also another reason, my son, which you have not yet thought of, and that is, that no one ever appears before the sultan without offering him some present, when any favour is required to be granted. Presents have at least this advantage, that if, for any reason of their own, they refuse your request, they listen to the demand that is made without any repugnance. But what present have you to offer him? And should you ever have anything that might be at all worthy the attention of so mighty a monarch; what proportion can your present possibly have with the demand you wish to make?"

Aladdin listened with the greatest patience to everything his mother said, in order to dissuade him from his purpose; and having reflected for some time upon every part of her remonstrance, he addressed her as follows: "I readily acknowledge to you, my dear mother, that it is a great piece of rashness in me to carry my pretensions so high as I do, and that it is also very inconsiderate in me to request you to go and propose this marriage to the sultan, without having first taken the proper means of procuring an audience and a favourable reception. I ask your pardon for doing so; but you must not wonder if the violence of the passion that possesses me has prevented me from thinking about anything but what was necessary to procure me the gratification I seek. I love the princess far beyond what you can possibly conceive: or rather I adore her, and I shall for ever persevere in my wish and intention of marrying her. This is a matter on which my mind is irrevocably fixed. I am much obliged to you for the hints which you have thrown out in what you have said, and I look upon this beginning as the first step towards the complete success I flatter myself I shall be blessed with.

"You rightly say, that it is not customary to request an audience of the sultan without a present in your hand, and that I have nothing worthy of offering him. But with regard to my having nothing worthy of his acceptance, that is a different matter. Do you not suppose, mother, that what I brought home with me on the day that I was saved, in the wonderful manner I before told you, from an almost inevitable death, would not be an acceptable present to the sultan? I mean what I brought home in the two purses, and in my sash, and which we have both hitherto taken for coloured glass; but which I now find to be precious stones of almost inestimable value, and exactly suitable to a great

sovereign. I became acquainted with their value by frequenting the shops of jewellers; and you may, I assure you, take my word for the truth of it. All those which I have seen at the jewellers' are not to be compared with what we possess, either for their size or beauty; and yet they set a very high price upon them. In fact, we are both of us ignorant of the value of ours; yet, although that is the case, as far as I can judge from the little experience I have, I am well persuaded the present cannot but be very agreeable to the sultan. You have a porcelain dish sufficiently large, and of a very good shape for holding them. Bring it here, and let us see the effect they will produce when we have arranged them according to their different colours.

Aladdin's mother brought the dish, and he took the precious stones out of the two purses and arranged them. The effect they produced in broad daylight by the variety of their colours, by their lustre and brilliancy, was so great, that both mother and son were absolutely dazzled, and they were in the greatest astonishment, because they had both only seen them by the light of a lamp. It is true that Aladdin had seen them on the trees, hanging like fruits, which afforded a most brilliant sight; but as he was then, as it were, a child, he had looked upon these jewels only as playthings, and had regarded them in no other point of view.

After having for some time admired the beauty of the present, "You cannot now," said Aladdin, resuming the conversation, "excuse yourself any longer from going and presenting yourself to the sultan, under the pretence that you have nothing to offer him. Here is a present which, in my opinion, will procure for you the most favourable reception."

Although the mother of Aladdin, notwithstanding its great beauty and brilliancy, did not think this present near so valuable as her son did, yet she nevertheless supposed it would be very acceptable; she was therefore aware that she had nothing to answer respecting that point. She then again resorted to the nature of the request which Aladdin wished her to make to the sultan, which was a constant source of disquietude to her: "I cannot, my son," she said, "possibly conceive that this present will produce the effect you wish, or that the sultan will look upon you with a favourable eye. And it becomes necessary for me to acquit myself with propriety in the business you wish me to undertake. I am convinced that I shall not have courage enough, and shall be struck quite dumb: and I shall thus not only lose all my labour, but the present also, which, according to what you say, is uncommonly rich and valuable: and after this I shall have to come back and inform you of the destruction of all your hopes and expectations. I have thus told you what I know will happen, and you ought to believe it. But," added she, "if I should act so contrary to my opinion, as to submit to your wishes, and should have sufficient courage to make the request you desire, be assured that the sultan will either ridicule me and send me back as a mad woman, or that he will be in such a passion, and with reason too, that both you and I shall most infallibly fall the victims to it."

Aladdin's mother continued to give her son many other reasons, in order to prevail upon him to change his mind; but the charms of the princess Badroulboudour had made too strong an impression upon his heart to suffer his intentions to be altered. He persisted in requiring his mother to perform her part of what he had resolved upon; and the regard she had for him, as well as the dread lest he should give himself up to some horrid excess, at length conquered her repugnance, and she acceded to his wishes.

As it was now very late, and the time of going to the palace to be presented to the sultan was passed on that day, they let the matter rest till the next. Aladdin and his mother talked of nothing else the rest of the day, and the former took every opportunity of saying to her all he could think of, to confirm

her resolution of going and presenting herself to the sultan. But notwithstanding everything he could say, his mother could not be persuaded that she should ever succeed in this affair; and indeed there appeared every reason for her to doubt it. "My dear child," said she, "even if the sultan should receive me as favourably as my regard for you would lead me to wish, and should listen with the greatest patience to the proposal you request me to make, will he not, even after so gracious a reception, inquire of me what property you possess, and where your estates are; for he will of course, in the first instance, rather ask about this matter, than about your personal appearance; if, I say, he should ask me this question, what answer do you wish me to make?"

"Do not, mother, let us distress ourselves," replied Aladdin, "about a thing that may never happen. Let us first see how the sultan will receive you, and what answer he will give you. If he should wish to be informed of what you mention, I will find out some answer to make him. I put the greatest confidence in my lamp, by means of which we have been able for some years past to live in the manner we have done. It will not desert me when I have most need of it."

His mother had not a word to say to the speech of Aladdin. She might naturally suppose that the lamp which he mentioned might be able to perform much more astonishing things than simply to procure them the means of subsistence. This satisfied her, and at the same time smoothed all the difficulties which seemed to oppose themselves to the business she had promised to undertake for her son respecting the sultan. Aladdin, who easily penetrated into his mother's thoughts, said to her, "Above all things, mind and keep this matter secret, for upon that depends all the success we may either of us expect in this affair." They then separated for the night, and retired to bed; but love, joined to the great schemes of aggrandisement which the son had in view, prevented him from passing the night so tranquilly as he wished. He got up at daybreak, and went immediately to call his mother. He was anxious for her to dress herself as soon as possible, that she might repair to the gate of the sultan's palace, and enter at the same time that the grand vizier and other viziers, and all the officers of state, went into the divan, or hall of audience, where the sultan always assisted in person.

Aladdin's mother did everything as her son wished. She took the porcelain dish, in which the present of jewels was, and folded it up in a very fine linen cloth. She then took another less fine, and tied the four corners of it together, that she might carry it with less trouble. She afterwards set out, to the great joy of Aladdin, and took the road towards the palace of the sultan. The grand vizier, accompanied by the other viziers and proper officers of the court, had already gone in before she arrived at the gate. The crowd made by those who had business at the divan was very great. The doors were opened, and she went into the divan with the rest. It formed a most beautiful saloon, very large and spacious, with a grand and magnificent entrance. She stopped, and placed herself so that she was opposite the sultan, the grand vizier, and other officers, who formed the council on both sides. They called up the different parties one after the other, according to the order in which their petitions had been presented; and their different causes were heard, pleaded, and determined, till the usual hour of breaking up the council. The sultan then rose, took leave of the members, and went back to his apartment, into which he was followed by the grand vizier. The other viziers and officers who formed the council then went away. All those whose private business had brought them there did the same; some being highly delighted at having gained their cause, while others were but ill satisfied with the decision pronounced against them; and a third party still anxious and desirous of having their business come on at a future meeting.

Aladdin's mother, who saw the sultan get up and retire, rightly imagined that he would not appear any more that day, as she observed that every one was going away ; she therefore determined to return home. When Aladdin saw her come back with the present in her hand, he knew not at first what to think of the success of her journey. He could scarcely open his mouth to inquire what intelligence she brought him, from the fear that she had something unfortunate to announce. This good woman, who had never before set her foot within the walls of a palace, and who of course knew not the least about the customs of the place, very soon relieved her son from the embarrassment in which he was, by saying to him with an air of gaiety, "I have seen the sultan, my son, and am persuaded he has seen me also. I placed myself directly opposite to him ; and there was no person in the way to prevent his seeing me : but he was so much engaged in speaking with those on both sides of him, that I really felt compassion to see the patience and trouble he took to listen to them. This lasted so long, that I believe, at length, he was quite worn out ; for he got up before any one expected it, and retired very suddenly, without staying to hear a great many others, who were all ranged in readiness to address him in their turn ; and indeed this gave me great pleasure ; for I began to lose all patience, and was extremely tired with remaining on my feet so long ; there was, however, no other restraint, and I will not fail to return to-morrow : the sultan will not then, perhaps, be so much engaged."

However desperate Aladdin's passion was, he was obliged to be satisfied with this excuse, and to summon up all his patience. He had at least the satisfaction of knowing that his mother had got over the most difficult part of the business, which was that of obtaining an interview with the sultan ; and therefore hoped that, like those who had spoken to him in her presence, she would not hesitate to acquit herself of the commission with which she was entrusted when the favourable moment of addressing him should arrive.

The next morning, quite as early as on the preceding day, Aladdin's mother set out for the sultan's palace with the present of jewels ; but her journey was useless. She found the gate of the divan shut, and learnt that the council never sat two days together, but alternately, and that she must come again on the following morning. She went back with this intelligence to her son, who was again obliged to exert his patience. She returned again to the palace six different times on the appointed days, always placing herself opposite the sultan, but she was every time as unsuccessful as at first ; and she would have gone probably a hundred times with as little use, if the sultan, who constantly saw her standing opposite to him every day the divan sat, had not taken notice of her. This is the more probable, as it was only those who had petitions to present or causes to be heard that approached the sultan, each in his turn pleading his cause according to his rank, and Aladdin's mother was not in this situation.

One day, however, when the council was broken up, and the sultan had retired to his apartment, he said to his grand vizier, "For some time past I have observed a certain woman, who has come regularly every day I hold my council, and who carries something in her hand, wrapped up in a linen cloth. She remains standing from the beginning of the audience till it is concluded, and always takes care to place herself opposite to me. Do you know what she wants ?"

The grand vizier, who did not wish to appear ignorant of the matter, though, in fact, he knew no more about it than the sultan himself, replied : "Your majesty, sire, is not ignorant, that women often make complaints upon the most trivial subjects ; she appears to have come to your majesty with some complaint, that they have sold her some bad meat, or something else of equal insignificance." This answer, however, did not satisfy the sultan. "The very next

day the council sits," said he to the grand vizier "if this woman returns, do not fail to call her, that I may hear what she has to say." The grand vizier only answered by kissing his hand, and placing it on his head, to show that he would rather lose it than fail in his duty.

The mother of Aladdin had already been so much in the habit of going to the palace on the days the council had met, that she now thought it no trouble, provided she by these means proved to her son that she neglected nothing that depended upon her; and that he had, therefore, no reason to complain of her. She consequently returned to the palace the next day the council met, and placed herself near the entrance of the divan opposite the sultan, as had been her usual practice.

The grand vizier had not made his report of any business, before the sultan perceived Aladdin's mother. Touched with compassion at the excessive patience she had shown: "In the first place," said he to the grand vizier, "and for fear you should forget it, do you not observe the woman whom I mentioned to you the last time: order her to come here, and we will begin by hearing what she has to say, and expedite her business." The grand vizier immediately pointed out this woman to the chief of the ushers, who was standing near him ready to receive his orders, and desired him to go and bring her before the sultan. The officer went directly to the mother of Aladdin, and having made a sign to her, she followed him to the foot of the throne, where he left her, and went back to his place near the grand vizier.

Aladdin's mother, following the example that so many others whom she had seen approach the sultan had set her, prostrated herself, with her face towards the carpet which covered the steps of the throne; and she remained in that situation till the sultan commanded her to rise. She did so; and the sultan then addressed her in these words: "For this long time past, my good woman, I have seen you regularly attend my divan, and remain near the entrance from the time it began to assemble till it broke up. What is the business that brings you here?" On hearing this, she prostrated herself a second time, and on rising, answered thus: "High monarch, mightier than all the monarchs of the world, before I inform your majesty of the extraordinary and almost incredible cause that compels me to appear before your sublime throne, I entreat you to pardon the boldness, nay, I might say the impudence, of the request I am going to make to you. It is of so uncommon a nature that I tremble, and feel almost overcome with shame, to propose it to my sultan." In order, however, that she might have full liberty to explain herself, the sultan commanded every one to leave the divan, and remained with only his grand vizier in attendance: he then told her that she might speak, and discover everything without any fear.

The goodness of the sultan, however, did not satisfy Aladdin's mother, although he had thus prevented her from being obliged to explain her wishes before the whole assembly. She was still anxious to screen herself from the indignation which she could not but dread the proposal she had to make him would excite, and from which she could not otherwise defend herself. "Sire," said she, again addressing the sultan, "I once more entreat your majesty to assure me of your pardon beforehand, in case you should think my request at all injurious or offensive." "Whatever it may be," replied the sultan, "I pardon you from this moment; not the least harm shall happen to you from anything you may say: speak, therefore, with confidence."

When Aladdin's mother had thus taken every precaution, like a woman who dreaded the anger of the sultan at the very delicate proposal she was about to make him, she faithfully related to him by what means Aladdin had seen the princess Badroulboudour, and with what a violent passion this fatal sight had inspired him; the declaration of it that he had made to her, as well as every

remonstrance she had urged in order to avert his thoughts from this passion ; "a passion," added she, "as injurious to your majesty as it is to the princess your daughter ; but my son would not profit by anything I could say, or acknowledge his temerity ; he obstinately persevered, and even threatened me to be guilty of some rash action or other through his despair, if I refused to come and demand of your majesty the princess in marriage. I have been obliged, therefore, to comply with his wishes, although this compliance was very much against my will. And once more I entreat your majesty to pardon not only me for making such a request, but also my son Aladdin for having conceived the rash and daring wish of aspiring to so illustrious an alliance."

The sultan listened to this speech with the greatest patience and good humour, and showed not the least mark of either anger or indignation at the request ; nor did he even turn it into ridicule. Before he returned any answer to this good woman, he asked her what she had got thus tied up in a cloth. Upon this she immediately took up the porcelain dish which she had first set down at the foot of the throne, and having uncovered it, she presented it to the sultan.

It is impossible to express the surprise and astonishment which this monarch felt when he saw collected together in that dish such a quantity of the most precious, perfect, and brilliant jewels, the size of which was greater than any he had before seen. His admiration for some time was such, that it rendered him absolutely motionless. When, however, he began to recollect himself, he took the present from the hand of Aladdin's mother, and exclaimed in a transport of joy, "Ah ! how very beautiful, how extremely rich !" And then, having admired them all one after another, and putting each again in the same place, he turned to his grand vizier, and showing him the dish, he asked him if he did not agree with him, that he had never before seen any jewels so perfect and valuable. The vizier was himself delighted with them. "Well," added the sultan, "what do you say to such a present ? Must not the donor be worthy of the princess my daughter ; and must I not give her to him who comes and demands her at such a price ?"

This speech of the sultan very much agitated the grand vizier, because the former had some time since given him to understand that he had an intention of bestowing the hand of the princess upon his only son. He was fearful, therefore, and his apprehensions were not without foundation, that the sultan would be dazzled by so rich and extraordinary a present, and would in consequence of it alter his mind. He therefore approached the sultan, and whispering in his ear, "Sire," said he, "every one must allow that this present is not unworthy of the princess ; but I entreat you to grant me three months before you absolutely determine. I hope that long before that time my son, for whom you have had the condescension to express to me that you feel a great inclination, will be able to offer you a much more considerable present than that of Aladdin, of whom your majesty knows nothing." Although the sultan was in his own mind quite persuaded that it was not possible for his grand vizier to enable his son to make so valuable a present to the princess, he nevertheless paid every attention to what he said, and even granted him this favour. He therefore turned towards Aladdin's mother, and said to her, "Go, my good woman, return home, and tell your son that I agree to the proposal he has made through you, but that I cannot bestow the princess my daughter in marriage until I have ordered and prepared a variety of furniture and ornaments, which will not be ready for three months. At the end of that time do you return here."

The mother of Aladdin went back, and felt the greater joy because she had in the first place conceived even the access to the sultan for a person of her

condition as absolutely impossible ; and because also she had received so favourable an answer, when, on the contrary, she had expected a rebuke that would have overwhelmed her with confusion. When Aladdin saw his mother enter the house, there were two circumstances that led him to suppose she brought him good news ; the one was, that she had returned much sooner than usual ; and the other, that her countenance expressed pleasure and good humour. " Well, mother," said Aladdin, " what have I to hope ? Am I doomed to die with despair ? " When she had taken off her veil, and had sat down on the sofa by his side, " My son," she said, " that I may not hold you any longer in suspense, I will in the first place tell you, that so far from thinking of dying, you have every reason to be satisfied." She then went on with her narrative, and told him in what manner she had obtained an audience before every other person ; the precautions she had taken to make her request to the sultan in such a way as not to offend him, and the favourable answer he had given her from his own lips. She then added, that as far as she could judge from everything the sultan did, it was the present that had such a powerful effect upon his mind, as to induce him to return a favourable answer. " At least, I think so," added she, " because before the sultan returned me any answer at all, the grand vizier whispered something in his ear, and I was afraid that it would tend to lessen the good intentions he seemed to have towards you."

When Aladdin received this intelligence, he thought himself the happiest of mortals. He thanked his mother for all the pains she had taken throughout the whole of this transaction, and for the happy success which was so important to his repose. Impatient, however, as he was to possess the object of his affection, three months seemed to him to be an age ; he nevertheless endeavoured to wait with patience, as he relied upon the word of the sultan, which he considered as irrevocable. In the mean time he not only reckoned the hours, the days, and the weeks, but even every moment till this period should elapse.

It happened one evening, when about two months of this time was passed, that as Aladdin's mother was going to light her lamp, she found that she had no oil in the house. She therefore went out to buy some ; and on going out into the city, she found that there was some festivity and rejoicing going forward. In fact, all the shops, instead of being shut up, were open, and ornamented with branches and decorations, and every preparation making for an illumination, each person endeavouring to excel the rest in splendour and magnificence, in order to show his zeal. Every one also was giving marks of his pleasure and rejoicing. The streets were literally crowded with the different officers in their dresses of ceremony, mounted on horses most richly caparisoned, and surrounded with a great number of attendants and domestics on foot, who were going and coming all ways. Upon seeing all this, she asked the merchant of whom she bought the oil, what it all meant. " Whence come you, my good woman," said he, " not to know that the son of the grand vizier is this evening to be married to the princess Badroulboudour, the daughter of our sultan ? She is just now coming from the bath, and the officers whom you see have assembled here, in order to escort her back to the palace, where the ceremony is to be performed."

Aladdin's mother did not want to hear any more. She returned home with all possible speed, and quite out of breath. She found her son there, who was not in the least prepared for the bad news she brought him. " Everything, my son," she exclaimed, " is lost. You depended upon the fair promises of the sultan, and it will all come to nothing." Aladdin, alarmed at these words, instantly replied. " On what account, mother, will not the sultan keep his

word? How do you know anything about it?" "This very evening," answered she, "the son of the grand vizier is to marry the princess Badroulboudour at the palace." She then related to him in what way she had learnt the news, and informed him of all the circumstances which prevented her from having the least doubt of its truth.

Aladdin was quite astonished at this intelligence. He received it like a thunder-stroke. Any one but himself would have been quite overwhelmed by it, but a sort of secret jealousy prevented him from remaining long in this state. He instantly brought the lamp to his recollection,—that lamp which had hitherto been so useful to him; and then, without venting his rage in vain reproaches against the sultan, the grand vizier, or the son of that officer, he only said, "This minister's son, mother, shall not be so happy to-night as he expects; while I am gone for a few moments into my chamber, do you prepare supper."

His mother easily comprehended that Aladdin intended to make use of the lamp, in order, if possible, to prevent the marriage of the grand vizier's son with the princess Badroulboudour from being completed. Nor did she deceive herself; for he was no sooner in his own room, than he took the wonderful lamp, which he kept there, that his mother might never be again alarmed at it, as she had been, when the Genius put her into so great a fright. He had no sooner taken the lamp and rubbed it in the usual place, than the Genius instantly appeared before him. "What do you wish?" said he to Aladdin; "I am ready to obey you as your slave, and the slave of those who have the lamp in their hands, both I and the other slaves of the lamp." "Attend to me then," answered Aladdin; "you have hitherto brought me only what I have wanted to eat and drink. I have now a business for you of more importance. I have demanded of the sultan the princess Badroulboudour, his daughter, in marriage. He promised her to me, and only requested a delay of three months. Instead, however, of keeping his word, he has this very evening, before that period has elapsed, given his daughter in marriage to the son of the grand vizier. I have just now been informed of it, and the thing is certain. What, therefore, I have to order you to do is this: as soon as the bride and bridegroom shall be placed by each other's side, take them up, and bring them both instantly here in their bed." "Master," replied the Genius, "I will obey you; have you anything else to command?" "Nothing at present," added Aladdin. The Genius instantly disappeared.

Aladdin then went back to his mother, and supped with her in the same tranquil manner as usual. After supper he entered into conversation with her for some time respecting the marriage of the princess, as of a thing that did not in the least embarrass him. He afterwards returned to his chamber, and left his mother to repose whenever she pleased. He, of course, did not retire to rest, but waited in expectation of the return of the Genius, and the execution of the orders he had given him.

In the mean time everything was prepared in the sultan's palace to celebrate the nuptials of the princess, and the whole evening was spent in ceremonies and rejoicings till the night was far advanced. When all this was concluded, the son of the grand vizier, at a sign, that the chief of the eunuchs belonging to the princess privately gave him, retired unperceived; and this officer then introduced him into the apartment belonging to the princess his wife, and conducted him to the chamber where the nuptial couch was prepared. He retired to bed first, and in a short time after the sultana, accompanied by her own women, and those of her daughter, brought the bride into the room. She made all possible resistance, as is usual with new-married girls. The sultana assisted in undressing her; and placed her in bed almost by force; and

after she had embraced her, and wished her a good night, she retired with all the other females, the last of whom shut the door of the chamber.

Scarcely had this taken place, before the Genius, like the faithful slave of the lamp, endeavouring with the greatest exactness to execute the commands of those in whose hands it might be, took up the bed with the bride and bridegroom in it, without having given the latter an opportunity of bestowing the smallest endearment upon his wife, and to the great astonishment of them both, in an instant transported them to Aladdin's chamber, where he set them down.

Aladdin, who was waiting for this event with the greatest impatience, did not long suffer the son of the grand vizier to remain in bed with the princess. "Take this bridegroom," said he to the Genius, "and shut him up in the out-house, and return again in the morning just at daybreak." The Genius instantly took the grand vizier's son out of bed in his shirt, and transported him to the place Aladdin had commanded, where he left him; having first breathed upon him in such a way, that he perceived the effects of it in every limb, as it prevented him from stirring from his place.

How violent soever the passion was which Aladdin felt for the princess, he did not enter into any long conversation with her when he was with her alone. "Fear nothing, most adorable princess," he exclaimed with an impassioned air; "you are here in safety, and however violent the love which I feel for you may be, with whatever ardour I adore your beauty and your charms, be assured that I will never exceed the limits of the profound respect I have for you. If I have been forced," he added, "to proceed to this extremity, it has not been with the intention of offending you, but to prevent an unjust rival from possessing you, contrary to the promise which the sultan your father has made in my favour."

The princess, who knew nothing of all these particulars, paid very little attention to what Aladdin said. She was indeed no longer in a condition to answer him. The alarm and astonishment into which this surprising and unexpected adventure had thrown her had such an effect upon her, that Aladdin could not get a single word from her. He did not however remain long in this state, but immediately undressed himself, and laid down in the place of the grand vizier's son, with his back turned towards the princess, having first taken the precaution to place a sabre between the princess and himself, in order to show her that he deserved to be punished if he attempted her honour.

Aladdin was satisfied with having thus deprived his rival of the happiness which he had this night flattered himself with the enjoyment of, and slept very tranquilly. But how different was the case with the princess! never in her whole life did she pass so unpleasant and disagreeable a night. And it is only necessary to reflect for one instant on the place and situation in which the Genius left the son of the grand vizier, to judge that this bridegroom spent his in a still more afflicting manner.

Aladdin had no occasion to rub his lamp the next morning to call the Genius. He returned at the appointed hour, and while Aladdin was dressing himself. "Here I am," said he to Aladdin; "what commands have you for me?" "Go," answered Aladdin, "and bring back the son of the grand vizier from the place where you have put him, place him again in this bed, and transport it back again to the palace of the sultan whence you have brought it." The Genius instantly went to relieve the grand vizier's son from his post, and as soon as he appeared, Aladdin took away his sabre. He placed the bridegroom by the side of the princess, and in one moment replaced the bed in the very same chamber of the sultan's palace whence he had before taken it.

It is necessary to remark, that during all these transactions the Genius was

invisible to the princess and the son of the grand vizier. His hideous form would have killed them with fright. They did not even hear a single word of the conversation that passed between Aladdin and him, and perceived only the agitation of the bed, and the transporting of it from one place to another; and indeed it is easy to imagine that this frightened them quite enough.

The Genius had no sooner put the nuptial couch in its place than the sultan, curious to learn how the princess his daughter had passed the first night of her marriage, entered the chamber and wished her a good morning. The son of the grand vizier, half dead with the cold he had suffered all night, and not yet having had time enough to warm himself, jumped out of bed as soon as he heard some person opening the door, and went into the dressing-room where he had undressed himself in the evening.

The sultan came up to the bedside of the princess and kissed her between her eyes, as is the usual custom in wishing any one a good morning. He asked her, with a smile upon his face, how she had passed the night; but when he lifted up his head, and looked at her with great attention, he was extremely surprised to observe her in the most dejected and melancholy state. He could not remark, either by any blush that overspread her face, or by any other sign, enough to gratify his curiosity. She cast upon him the most sorrowful looks, and showed by her whole manner, that she laboured either under the most severe affliction or the greatest degree of discontent. The sultan again spoke to her, but as he found he was unable to get a word from her, he thought it might arise from a becoming modesty, and therefore retired. He could not, however, but suspect from her continued silence that something very extraordinary had happened. He went immediately to the apartment of the sultana, to whom he mentioned the state in which he had found the princess, and the reception she had given him. "Sire," replied the sultana, "do not let this surprise your majesty; there is not a single new-married woman who would not act in the same way the day after her nuptials. It will be a very different thing in two or three days. She will then receive the sultan her father as becomes her. I will go and see her," added the sultana; "I am very much deceived if she will receive me in the same manner."

As soon as the sultana was dressed, she went to the apartment of the princess, who was not yet risen. She approached the bed, and wishing her a good morning, embraced her; but her surprise was excessive when she found that the princess was not only silent but that she was in the greatest distress. She therefore concluded that something which she could not yet comprehend, had happened to her. "My dear daughter," said the sultana to her, "what is the reason that you so ill repay the caresses I bestow upon you? You ought not to act thus towards your mother. You cannot suppose but that I am acquainted with everything that can have happened to you under the circumstances in which you are. But I will not suppose that this is the fact; something else surely has occurred which I do not understand. Tell me then candidly, and do not suffer me to remain so long in an uncertainty that distresses me beyond measure."

At length, fetching a deep sigh, the princess Badroulboudour broke silence. "Alas! my most honoured mother," she cried, "pardon me if I have failed in any respect that is due to you. My mind is so entirely absorbed by the extraordinary and extraordinary things that have happened to me last night, that I have not yet recovered from my astonishment and my fears, and have so little supportable, as I can recollect myself." She then related, in the most lively colours, after she and her husband were reclined, the bed had been sent for the grand transported into an ill-furnished and dismal chamber, where, as he mentioned quite alone and separated from her husband, without in the least that he had not seen was become of him; and that she found in this apartment.

after having addressed a few words to her, which her terror prevented her from understanding, lay down in her husband's place, having first put his sabre between them; and that when morning approached, her husband was restored to her, and the bed again brought back to its place in an instant of time. "The whole of this transaction," she added, "was but just completed when the sultan my father came into my chamber. I was then so absorbed in grief and distress that I could not answer him a single word; and I am afraid that he was very angry at the manner in which I received the honour that he did me. I hope, however, that he will pardon me when he shall become acquainted with my melancholy adventure, and the lamentable state in which I even now find myself."

The sultana listened with great attention to everything the princess had to relate, but she could not give full credit to the account. "You have done well, my child," she said to the princess, "not to inform the sultan your father of this matter. Take care that you mention it to no one, unless you wish to be taken for one who has lost her reason, which will certainly be the case if you should talk in this way to any other person." "Madam," replied the princess, "I assure you that I am in my right senses, and I know what I say; you may ask my husband, and he will tell you the same thing." "I will take care and inform myself of it," answered the sultana; "but even if he gives me the same account you have done, I shall not be more persuaded of the truth of it; in the mean time, however, do you get up, and drive this phantasy off your mind. It would be indeed a curious thing to see you troubled with such a fancy during the feasts that have been ordered on account of your nuptials, and which will last for many days, not only in the palace but all over the kingdom. Do you not already hear the trumpets, cymbals, and other instruments? All this ought to inspire you with joy and pleasure, and make you forget the fanciful dreams which you have mentioned to me." The sultana then called her woman, and after she had made her get up and seen her at her toilet, she went to the sultan's apartment, and told him that some fancy seemed to have got into the head of his daughter, but that it was a mere trifle. She then ordered the son of the grand vizier to be called, in order to inquire of him about what the princess had told her. But he felt himself so highly honoured by this alliance with the sultan, that he determined to feign ignorance of everything. "Tell me, son-in-law," said the sultana, "have you got the same strange ideas in your head as your wife?" "Madam," he replied, "may I be permitted to ask you for what reason you put this question to me?" "This is sufficient," answered the sultana, "I do not wish to know more; you have more sense than she has."

The festivities in the palace continued throughout the day; and the sultan, who did not neglect the princess, forgot nothing that he thought might inspire her with joy. He endeavoured to make her partake of the diversions and various exhibitions that were going on; but the recollection of what passed the preceding night made such a strong impression on her mind, that it was very perceptible something or other occupied her whole attention. The son of the grand vizier was not less afflicted at the wretched night he had passed; but his ambitious views made him dissemble, and therefore if persons had judged from his appearance, they would have thought him the happiest bridegroom in the

place where he was well informed of everything that had passed in the palace, it back again to the new-married pair would again sleep together, notwithstanding the distressing adventure that happened to them the night before. as he appeared, before, to leave them to repose in quiet, a short time before the side of the princess, again recourse to his lamp. The Genius instantly appeared, chamber of the sultana, with the accustomed speech in offering his services. It is necessary to

"The grand vizier's son and the princess Badroulboudour," replied he, "are again to sleep together this night. Go, and as soon as they are lain down, bring the bed hither, as you did yesterday."

The Genius obeyed Aladdin with equal fidelity and punctuality as on the night before, and the vizier's son passed this night in as cold and unpleasant a situation as he did the former, while the princess had the mortification of having Aladdin for her bedfellow, with the sabre, as before, placed between them. In the morning the Genius came, according to Aladdin's orders, replaced the bridegroom in the bed, and took it back to the chamber of the palace, whence he had taken it.

After the extraordinary reception which the princess Badroulboudour had given the sultan on the preceding morning, he was very anxious to learn how she had passed the second night, and whether she would again receive him in the manner she had before done. He went therefore to her apartment early in the morning, that he might satisfy himself. The grand vizier's son, still more mortified and distressed at his bad treatment the second night than he had been on the first, no sooner heard the sultan than he got up as fast as possible and ran into the dressing-room. The sultan came to her bedside and wished the princess a good morning, after having caressed her in the same manner as he had done the day before. "Well, my daughter," he said, "are you in as bad a humour this morning as you were yesterday? Tell me how you have passed the night." The princess retained the same silence, and the sultan perceived that she was still more dejected and distressed than she had been the morning before. He could therefore but infer that something very extraordinary had happened to her. Irritated at the mystery she made of it to him, "Daughter," said he, in an angry tone, and at the same time drawing his sabre, "either tell me what you thus conceal, or I will instantly strike off your head."

The princess, terrified at the manner in which the sultan menaced her, and at the sight of the drawn sabre, at length broke silence. "My dear father," she exclaimed with tears in her eyes, "if I have offended your majesty, I earnestly entreat your pardon. From your known goodness and clemency, I trust I shall change your anger into compassion when I shall have related in a full and faithful manner the distressing and melancholy situation in which I have been both last night and the night before." This preamble appeased and softened the sultan. She then related at length what had happened to her on both these horrible nights, and in a manner the most affecting, thus concluding her narrative, "If your majesty has the least doubt of any part of what I have said, you can easily inquire of the husband you have bestowed upon me; I am very well persuaded that he will prove to you the truth of everything I have related."

The sultan entered very fully into the distressing feelings this surprising adventure must have excited in his daughter's mind. "My child," said he, "you were wrong not to explain to me yesterday the strange business which you have just related, and in which I am not less interested than yourself. I have not bestowed you in marriage with the view to render you unhappy, but on the contrary, to increase your happiness and to afford you every enjoyment you so well deserve, and which you might reasonably expect from a husband who seemed to be very proper for you. Drive away, then, from your memory the melancholy ideas of what you have been relating to me; I will take care that you shall experience no more nights so disagreeable, nay so insupportable, as those which you have now suffered."

When the sultan got back to his apartment, he immediately sent for the grand vizier. "Have you seen your son," he asked him, "and has he mentioned anything in particular to you?" When the latter replied that he had not seen him, the sultan reported to him everything he had heard from the princess

Badroulboudour. He then added, "I have no doubt but that my daughter has told me the truth. I wish, nevertheless, to have this matter confirmed by the testimony of your son. Go, therefore, and ask him what has happened to him."

The grand vizier instantly went to his son; he informed him of what the sultan had said, and commanded him not to disguise the truth, and to tell him everything that passed. "I will conceal nothing from you, my father," replied his son; "everything the princess has told the sultan is true, but she was unable to give an account of the bad treatment which I in particular have experienced. Since my marriage, I have spent two of the most dreadful nights you can possibly conceive; and I cannot describe to you, in just and appropriate terms, all the various evils I have gone through. I do not mention the fright I was in, at finding myself lifted up in my bed four different times, without being able to see any one; and being transported from one place to another, without being able to conceive in what way it was brought about. But you can yourself judge of the dreadful state I was in, when I tell you, that I passed both nights, standing upright, in a miserable out-house, with nothing upon me but my shirt; and without having the power of moving from the spot where I was placed, or making the least motion, although there seemed to be no obstacle whatever to prevent me. Having said this I have no occasion to enter into a further detail of my sufferings. Let me however add, that all this has by no means lessened the respect and affection which I had for the princess my wife; though I confess to you most sincerely, that with all the honour and splendour that I derive from having the daughter of my sovereign for my wife, I would much sooner die than enjoy, for any length of time, this high alliance, if I must continue to undergo the horrible treatment I have already suffered. I am sure the princess must be of the same opinion as myself; and there is no doubt but that our separation is as necessary for her comfort as for my own. I entreat you, therefore, my dear father, by all the affection which led you to obtain this great honour for me, to endeavour to bring the sultan to have our marriage declared null and void."

However great might be the ambition of the grand vizier to have his son so nearly allied to the sultan, yet the fixed resolution which he found he had formed of dissolving his connexion with the princess, made him think it necessary to request his son to have patience for a few days before it was finally settled, in order to see whether this unpleasant business might not have an end. He then left his son and returned with the answer to the sultan, to whom he acknowledged that everything was true, as he had himself learnt from his son. And then, without waiting till the sultan himself spoke to him about annulling the marriage, to which he observed that he was much inclined, he requested permission for his son to leave the palace, and return to him, under the pretext that it was not just that the princess should be exposed for one instant longer to so terrible a persecution through regard for his son.

The grand vizier had no difficulty in obtaining his request. The sultan, who had already determined on the matter in his own mind, immediately gave orders for the rejoicings to be put a stop to, not only in his own palace, but in the city, and throughout the whole extent of his dominions; and in a short time every mark of public joy and festivity within the kingdom ceased. This sudden and unexpected change gave rise to a variety of different conjectures. Every one was inquiring why these contrary orders were issued: and all affirmed that the grand vizier had been seen coming out of the palace, towards his own house, accompanied by his son; and that both seemed very much dejected. Aladdin was the only person acquainted with the real reason; and he rejoiced heartily at the happy success arising from the use of the lamp. And having now learnt for a certainty that his rival had left the palace, and that the intended marriage was absolutely annulled, he had no further occasion to rub his lamp, and have

recourse to the Genius, in order to prevent the completion of the marriage. What, however, was most singular was, that neither the sultan nor the grand vizier, who had completely forgotten Aladdin and the request he had made, entertained the least idea that he had any part in the enchantment which occasioned the dissolution of the marriage of the princess.

Aladdin suffered the three months which the sultan wished to elapse before the marriage of the princess Badroulboudour and himself, to pass without making any application. He kept, however, an exact account of every day, and when the whole period was expired, he did not omit to send his mother on the very next morning to the palace, in order to put the sultan in mind of his promise. She went therefore to the palace, as her son had desired her, and stood at her usual place near the entrance of the divan. The sultan no sooner cast his eyes that way than he recollected her, and she instantly brought to his mind the request she had made, and the exact time to which he had deferred it. As the grand vizier approached to make some report to him, the sultan stopped him by saying, "I perceive that good woman, who presented us with the beautiful collection of jewels some time since; order her to come forward, and you can make your report after I have heard what she has to say." The grand vizier directly turned his head towards the entrance of the divan, and perceived the mother of Aladdin. He immediately called to the chief of the ushers, and pointing her out to him, desired him to bring her forward.

Aladdin's mother advanced to the foot of the throne, where she prostrated herself in the usual manner. After she had risen, the sultan asked her what she wished. "Sire," she replied, "I again present myself before the throne of your majesty, to represent to you in the name of my son Aladdin, that the three months which you desired him to wait, in consequence of the request I had to make to your majesty, are expired; and to entreat you to have the goodness to recall the circumstance to your remembrance."

When the sultan had desired a delay of three months before he answered the request of this good woman, the first time he saw her, he thought he should hear no more of a marriage which appeared to him so little suited to the princess his daughter, judging only from the poverty and low situation of Aladdin's mother, who always appeared before him in a very coarse and common dress. The application therefore which she now made to him to keep his word, embarrassed him very much, and he did not think it prudent to give her, at the moment, a direct answer. He consulted his grand vizier, and told him the repugnance he felt at concluding a marriage between the princess and an unknown person, whom fortune, he conjectured, had not raised much above the condition of a common subject.

The grand vizier did not hesitate to give his opinion on the subject. "Sire," said he to the sultan, "it seems to me that there is a very easy and yet certain method to avoid this unequal marriage, and of which this Aladdin, even if he were known to your majesty, could not complain; it is to set so high a price upon the princess your daughter, that all his riches, however great they may be, cannot amount to the value. This will be a way to make him desist from so bold, not to say arrogant, an attempt, and which he certainly does not seem to have considered well before he engaged in it."

The sultan approved of the advice of his grand vizier, and, after some little reflection, he said to Aladdin's mother, "Sultana, my good woman, ought always to keep their words; and I am ready to adhere to mine, and render your son happy by marrying him to the princess my daughter; but as I cannot bestow her in marriage till I better know how she will be provided for, tell your son, that I will fulfil my promise as soon as he shall send me forty large basins of massive gold, quite full of the same sort of things which you have

already presented me with from him, brought by an equal number of black slaves, each of whom shall be conducted by a white slave, young, well made, of good appearance, and richly dressed. These are the conditions upon which I am ready to bestow upon him the princess my daughter. Go, my good woman, and I will wait till you bring me his answer."

Aladdin's mother again prostrated herself at the foot of the throne and retired. In her way home she smiled within herself at the foolish thoughts of her son. "Where indeed," said she, "is he to find so many gold basins, and such a great quantity of jewels to fill them? Will he attempt to go back to the subterraneous cavern, the entrance of which is shut up, in order to gather them off the trees? And where can he procure all these handsome slaves which the sultan demands? He is far enough from having his wishes accomplished, and I believe he will not be very well satisfied with my embassy." When she entered the house, with her mind occupied by these thoughts, from which she judged Aladdin had nothing more to hope, "My son," said she, "I advise you to think no more of your marriage with the princess Badroulboudour. The sultan, indeed, received me with great goodness, and I believe that he was well inclined towards you; the grand vizier, however, if I am not mistaken, made him alter his opinion. After I had represented to his majesty that the three months were expired, and that I requested him, as from you, to recollect his promise, I observed that he did not make me an answer until he had spoken some time in a low tone of voice to the grand vizier." She then gave him an exact detail of everything the sultan had said, and of the conditions upon which he consented to the marriage of the princess with him. "He is even now," added she, "awaiting your answer; but between ourselves," she continued, with a smile, "he may wait long enough." "Not so long as you may think, mother," replied Aladdin; "and the sultan deceives himself if he supposes by such exorbitant demands to prevent my thinking any more of the princess Badroulboudour. I expected to have still greater difficulties to surmount, and that he would have put a much higher price upon my incomparable princess. But I am now very well satisfied, and what he requires of me is trifling in comparison to what I would give him to possess such a treasure. While I am considering how to comply with his demands, do you go and see about something for dinner, and leave me to myself."

As soon as his mother had gone out to purchase some provisions, Aladdin took the lamp, and having rubbed it, the Genius instantly appeared, and demanded of him in the usual terms what it was he wanted, for he was ready to obey him. "The sultan agrees to give me the princess his daughter in marriage," said Aladdin: "but he first demands of me forty large basins of massive gold, filled to the very top with the various fruits of the garden, from which I took the lamp that you are the slave of. He requires also, that these forty basins should be carried by as many black slaves, preceded by an equal number of young, handsome, and well-made white slaves, very richly dressed. Go, and procure me this present as soon as possible, that I may send it to the sultan before the sitting of the divan is over." The Genius only said that his commands should be instantly executed, and disappeared.

In a very short time the Genius returned with forty black slaves, each carrying upon his head a large golden basin of great weight, full of pearls, diamonds, rubies, and emeralds, equally valuable for their brilliancy and size, with those which had already been presented to the sultan. Each basin was covered with a cloth of silver, embroidered with flowers of gold. All these slaves with their golden basins, together with the white ones, entirely filled the house, which was but small as well as the court in front, and a garden behind it. The Genius asked Aladdin if he was contented, and whether he had

any further commands for him : and on being told he had not, he immediately disappeared.

Aladdin's mother now returned from market, and was in the greatest surprise, on coming home, to see so many persons, and so much riches. When she had set down the provisions which she had brought with her, she was going to take off her veil, but Aladdin prevented her. "My dear mother," he cried, "there is no time to lose. It is of consequence that you should return to the palace before the divan breaks up, and should immediately conduct there the present and dowry, which the sultan demands for the princess Badroulboudour, that he may judge from my diligence and exactness of my ardent and sincere zeal to procure the honour of entering into alliance with him."

Without waiting for his mother's answer, Aladdin opened the door that led into the street, and ordered all the slaves to go out one after the other. He then placed a white slave before each of the black ones, who carried the golden basins on their heads. When his mother, who followed the last black slave, was gone out, he shut the door, and remained quietly in his chamber, in the full expectation that the sultan, after receiving such a present as he had required, would now readily consent to accept him for a son-in-law.

The first white slave that went out of Aladdin's house occasioned every one who was going past to stop, and before all the eighty slaves, alternately a black and white one, had finished going out, the street was filled with a great crowd of people, who collected from all parts to see so grand and extraordinary a sight. The dress of each slave was made of a rich stuff, and so studded with precious stones, that they who thought themselves the best judges reckoned each of them at more than a million. Each dress was also very appropriate, and well adapted to the wearer. The graceful manner, elegant form, and great similarity of each slave, together with their marching at regular distances from each other, and the dazzling lustre that the different jewels which were set in their girdles of massive gold constantly shed, added to the branches of precious stones fastened to their head-dresses, which were all of a particular make, produced in the multitude of spectators who were assembled so excessive a degree of admiration that they could not take their eyes from them, so long as any one of them remained in sight. But all the streets were so thronged with people, that every one was obliged to remain in the spot where he happened to be.

As it was necessary to pass through several streets before they could arrive at the palace, the procession went through a great part of the city, and most of the inhabitants of every rank and quality were witnesses to this splendid spectacle. When the first of the eighty slaves arrived at the gate of the first court of the palace, the porters were in the greatest haste, as soon as they perceived this astonishing procession approaching, to open it, as they took the first for a king, so richly and magnificently was he dressed. They were advancing to kiss the hem of his robe when the slave, instructed by the Genius, stopped them, and in a grave tone of voice, said, "Our master will appear when the time shall be proper."

The first slave, followed by all the rest, advanced as far the second court, which was very spacious, and contained those apartments that the sultan inhabited when the divan sat. The officers who were at the head of the sultan's guards, were very handsomely clothed, but they were completely eclipsed by the eighty slaves, who were the bearers of Aladdin's present, and who themselves formed a part of it. Nothing, in short, throughout the sultan's whole palace appeared so beautiful and brilliant ; and however magnificently dressed the different nobles of the court might be, they dwindled to nothing in comparison with what was now to be seen.

As the sultan had been informed of the march and arrival of these slaves, he had given orders to have them admitted. As soon, therefore, as they presented themselves before it, they found the door of the divan open. They entered in regular order, one part going to the right, and the other to the left. After they were all within the hall, and had formed a large semicircle before the throne of the sultan, each of the black slaves placed the basin which he carried upon the carpet. They then all prostrated themselves so low, that their foreheads touched the ground. The white slaves also, at the same time, performed the same ceremony. They then all got up, and in doing so, the black slaves skilfully uncovered the basins which were before them, and then remained standing with their hands crossed upon their breasts in a very modest attitude.

The mother of Aladdin, who had in the mean time advanced to the foot of the throne, having first prostrated herself, thus addressed the sultan. "My son Aladdin, sire, is not ignorant that this present which he has sent your majesty, is very much beneath the inestimable worth of the princess Badroulboudour. He nevertheless hopes that your majesty will favourably accept it, and that you will endeavour to make it agreeable to the princess. He has the greater reliance that his expectations will be fulfilled, because he has tried to conform himself to the conditions which you were pleased to point out."

The sultan was unable to pay the least attention to the complimentary address of Aladdin's mother. The very first look he cast upon the forty golden basins, heaped up with jewels of the most brilliant lustre, finest water, and greatest value he had ever seen, as well as the eighty slaves, who seemed like so many kings, both from the magnificence of their dress and their fine appearance, made such an impression upon him, that he could not restrain his admiration. Instead, therefore, of making any answer to the compliments of Aladdin's mother, he addressed himself to the grand vizier, who could not himself conceive where such an immense profusion of riches could possibly come from. "Well, vizier," he exclaimed, in the hearing of all, "what do you think of the person, whoever he may be, who has now sent me so rich and wonderful a present; a person of whom neither I nor you have the least knowledge? Do you not think that he is worthy of the princess my daughter?"

Whatever jealousy or pain the grand vizier might feel at thus seeing an unknown person become the son-in-law of the sultan in preference to his own son, he was nevertheless afraid to dissemble his real opinion on the present occasion. It was very evident that Aladdin had by these means become, in the eyes of the sultan, very deserving of being honoured with so high an alliance. He, therefore, answered the sultan in these terms. "Far be it from me, sire, to suppose that he who makes your majesty so worthy a present, should himself be undeserving the honour you wish to bestow upon him. I would even say that he deserved still more, if indeed all the treasures of the universe could be put in competition with the princess your daughter." All the nobles who attended and formed the divan, showed by their applause that their opinion was the same as that of the grand vizier.

The sultan hesitated no longer. He did not even think of informing himself whether Aladdin possessed any other qualifications that would render him worthy of aspiring to the honour of becoming his son-in-law. The sight alone of such immense riches, and the wonderful celerity with which Aladdin had fulfilled his request, without making the least difficulty about the conditions, however exorbitant, for which he had stipulated, easily persuaded him that Aladdin would not be deficient in anything that could render him as accomplished and deserving as he could wish. That he might, therefore, send back Aladdin's mother as well satisfied as she could possibly expect, he said to her,

"Go, my good woman, and tell your son that I am waiting with open arms to receive and embrace him; and that the greater diligence he makes to come and receive from my hands the gift I am ready to bestow upon him, in the princess my daughter, the greater pleasure it will afford me."

Aladdin's mother had no sooner departed, as happy as a woman of her condition could be, in seeing her son exalted to a situation beyond her greatest expectations, than the sultan put an end to the audience; and coming down from his throne, he ordered the eunuchs belonging to the princess to be called, and to take up the basins and carry them to the apartment of their mistress, where he himself went, in order to examine them with her at their leisure. The chief of the eunuchs immediately saw that this order was complied with.

The eighty slaves were not forgotten; they were conducted into the interior of the palace, and when, some time after, he was speaking of their splendour to the princess, he ordered them to come opposite to her apartment, that she might see them through the lattices, and be convinced that so far from having given an exaggerated account of them, he had said much less than they deserved.

In the mean time, Aladdin's mother got home, and instantly showed by her manner, that she was the bearer of most excellent news. "You have every reason, my dear son," she said, "to be satisfied. You have accomplished your wishes contrary to my expectations, and what I have hitherto declared. Not to keep you any longer in suspense, I must inform you that the sultan, with the applause of his whole court, has announced that you are worthy to possess the princess Badroulboudour, and he is now waiting to embrace you and conclude the marriage. It is therefore time for you to think of making some preparations for this interview, that you may endeavour to equal the high opinion he has formed of your person. After, however, what I have seen of the wonders you have brought about, I am sure you will not fail in anything. I ought not, moreover, to forget to tell you, that the sultan waits for you with the greatest impatience, and therefore, that you must lose no time in making your appearance before him."

Aladdin was so delighted at this intelligence, and so taken up with the thoughts of the enchanting object of his love, that he hardly answered his mother, but instantly retired to his chamber. He then took up the lamp that had thus far been so friendly to him, by supplying all his wants and fulfilling all his wishes, and had no sooner rubbed it, than the Genius again showed his ready obedience to its power, by instantly appearing to execute his commands. "Genius," said Aladdin to him, "I have called you to take me immediately to a bath; and when I shall have finished bathing, I wish you to have in readiness for me a richer, and, if possible, more magnificent dress than was ever worn by any monarch." Aladdin had no sooner concluded his speech, than the Genius rendered him invisible, like himself, took him in his arms, and transported him to a bath formed of the finest marble, of the most beautiful and diversified colours. Without being able to see any one who waited upon him, Aladdin was undressed in a large and handsome saloon. From thence he was conducted into the bath, moderately heated, and was here washed and rubbed with various sorts of perfumed waters. After having passed through the different degrees of heat in the different parts of the bath, he went out, but quite different, as it were, from what he was before. His skin was white and fresh, his countenance blooming, and his whole body felt lighter and more active. He then went back to the saloon, where, instead of the dress he had left, he found the one he had desired the Genius to procure. By his assistance he dressed himself, showing the greatest admiration at each part of it as he put it on; and the whole of it was even beyond what he possibly could have com-

ceived. This business was no sooner over, than the Genius transported him back into the same chamber of his own house, whence he had brought him; he then inquired if he had any other commands. "Yes," replied Aladdin, "I am waiting till you bring me a horse as quickly as possible, which shall surpass in beauty and excellence the most valuable horse in the sultan's stables; the housings, saddle, bridle, and other furniture of which shall be worth more than a million of money."

"I also order you to get me at the same time twenty slaves, as well and richly clothed as those who carried the present, to attend on each side and behind my person, and twenty more to march in two ranks before. You must also procure six female slaves to attend upon my mother, all as well and richly clothed as those of the princess Badroulboudour, each of whom must carry a complete dress, fit in point of splendour and magnificence for any sultana. I want also ten thousand pieces of gold in ten separate purses. These are all my commands at present. Go, and be diligent."

Aladdin had no sooner given his orders to the Genius than he disappeared, and a moment after he returned with the horse, the forty slaves, ten of whom had each a purse with ten thousand pieces of gold in every one, and the six female slaves, each carrying a different dress for Aladdin's mother, wrapped up in a piece of silver tissue, and presented the whole to him.

Aladdin took only four out of the ten purses, and presented them to his mother for any purpose, as he said, that she might want them. He left the other six in the hands of the slaves who carried them, desiring them to keep them, and to throw them out by handfuls to the populace as they went along the streets in the way to the palace of the sultan. He ordered them also to march before him with the others, three on one side and three on the other. He then presented the six female slaves to his mother; telling her that they were for her, and would for the future consider her as their mistress, and that the dresses they had in their hands were for her use.

When Aladdin had arranged everything as he wished, he told the Genius that he would call him when he had any further occasion for his service. The latter instantly vanished. Aladdin then employed himself only in hastening to fulfil the wishes the sultan had expressed to see him as soon as possible. He directly sent one of the forty slaves to the palace—it is useless to call him the best-made or most handsome, for they were all equally so—with an injunction to address himself to the chief of the ushers, and inquire of him when his master might have the honour of throwing himself at the feet of the sultan. The slave was not long in delivering this message, and brought word back that the sultan was waiting for him with the greatest impatience.

Aladdin instantly mounted his horse, and began his march in the exact order that has been mentioned. Although he had never been on horseback in his life, he nevertheless appeared perfectly at his ease, and those who were the best skilled in horsemanship would never have taken him for a novice. The streets through which he passed were in an instant filled with crowds of people, who made the air resound with their acclamations, their shouts of admiration, and benedictions, particularly when the six slaves who carried the purses threw handfuls of gold on all sides. These expressions of joy and applause, however, not only came from the crowd who were employed in picking up the money, but chiefly from those of a superior rank in life, who thus publicly bestowed all the praise that such liberality as Aladdin's deserved. Not only they who remembered to have seen him playing about the streets, even when he was no longer a child, like a vagabond, did not now in the least recognise him; but even those persons who had seen and known him very lately, had great difficulty to bring him to their minds, so much were his features and character changed. This all arose

from the power the wonderful lamp possessed of acquiring by degrees for those who had it, every perfection adapted to the situation at which such a person arrived, by making a good and proper use of its virtues. More attention, therefore, was paid by every one to the person of Aladdin than to the magnificence with which he was surrounded, and which most of them had before seen when the slaves who carried, and those who accompanied, the present, went to the palace. The horse, however, was extremely admired by those who were judges, and were able to appreciate its beauty and excellence, without being dazzled by the richness and brilliancy of the diamonds and other precious stones with which it was covered. When the report spread about that the sultan had bestowed upon Aladdin the hand of the princess Badroulboundour, and this was soon universally known, no one ever thought about his birth, or even envied him his great fortune, because he appeared so well to deserve it.

He at length arrived at the palace, where everything was ready for his reception. When he came to the second gate, he wished to alight, agreeably to the custom observed by the grand vizier, the generals of the army, and the governors of the superior provinces; but the chief of the ushers, who attended him by the sultan's orders, prevented him, and accompanied him to the hall of audience, where he assisted him in dismounting from his horse, though Aladdin opposed it as much as possible, not wishing to receive such a distinction: all his efforts were, however, vain. In the mean time, all the ushers formed a double row at the entrance into the hall; and their chief, placing Aladdin on his right, went up through the midst of them, and conducted him quite to the foot of the throne.

As soon as the sultan perceived Aladdin, he was not more surprised at seeing him more richly and magnificently clothed than he was himself, than most unexpectedly astonished at the propriety of his manner, his beautiful figure, and a certain air of grandeur, very far removed from the degraded state in which his mother appeared in his presence. His astonishment, however, did not prevent him from rising and quickly descending two or three steps of his throne, in order to prevent Aladdin from throwing himself at his feet, and to embrace him with the most evident marks of friendship and affection. After this civility, Aladdin again endeavoured to cast himself at the sultan's feet, but he held his hand, and compelled him to ascend and sit between him and his grand vizier.

Aladdin then addressed the sultan in these words: "I receive the honours which your majesty has the goodness to bestow upon me because it is your pleasure; but you must permit me to say, that I have not forgotten that I was born your slave, that I am well aware of the greatness of your power, that I am not ignorant how much my birth places me beneath the splendour and brilliancy of that superior rank to which you are elevated. If there can be the shadow of a reason," he continued, "from which I can in the least merit so favourable a reception, I candidly avow that I am indebted for it to a boldness, which chance alone brought about, and in consequence of which I have raised my eyes, my thoughts, and my desires, to the divine princess, who is the sole object of my eager wishes. I request your majesty's pardon for my rashness, but I cannot dissemble that my grief would be the death of me, if I should lose the hopes of seeing them accomplished."

"My son," replied the sultan, again embracing him, "you would do me injustice to doubt even for an instant of the sincerity of my word; your life is too dear to me not to endeavour to preserve it for ever, by presenting you with the remedy that is in my power. I prefer the pleasure I derive from seeing and hearing you to all our united treasures."

As he concluded this speech, the sultan made a sign, and the air was imme-

diately filled with the sound of trumpets, hautboys, and tymbals, and the sultan then conducted Aladdin into a magnificent saloon, where a great feast was served up. The sultan and Aladdin ate by themselves; the grand vizier and nobles of the court, each according to their dignity and rank, waited upon them during their repast. The sultan, who had his eyes always fixed upon Aladdin, so great was the pleasure he derived from seeing him, entered into conversation on a variety of different topics. And while they were talking as they sat at table, whatever the subject of their discourse happened to be, Aladdin spoke with so much information and knowledge, that he completely confirmed the sultan in the good opinion he had at first formed of him.

When the repast was over, the sultan ordered the grand judge of his capital to attend, and commanded him to draw up, and instantly write out a contract of marriage between the princess Badroulboudour and Aladdin. While this was doing, the sultan conversed with Aladdin upon indifferent subjects, in the presence of the grand vizier and the nobles of the court, who all equally admired the solidity of his understanding, the great facility and fluency of his language, and the pure and delicate metaphors, that ornamented his discourse.

When the judge had drawn out the contract with all the requisite forms, the sultan asked Aladdin if he wished to remain in the palace, and conclude all the ceremonies that day. "Sir," he replied, "however impatient I may be to have entire possession of all your majesty's bounties, I request you to permit me to defer my happiness until I shall have built a palace to receive the princess in, that shall be even worthy of her merit and dignity: and for this purpose, I request that you will have the goodness to point out a suitable place for its situation, near your own, that I may always be ready to pay my court to your majesty. I will then neglect nothing to get it finished with all possible diligence." "My son," answered the sultan, "take whatever spot you think proper. There is a large open space before my palace, and I have thought for some time about filling it up; but remember that, to have my happiness complete, I cannot see you united too soon to my daughter." Having said this, he again embraced Aladdin, who now took leave of the sultan in as polished a manner as if he had been brought up and spent all his life at court.

Aladdin then mounted his horse, and returned home in the same order he came in, going back through the same crowd, and receiving the same acclamations from the people, who wished him all happiness and prosperity. As soon as he had entered the court and alighted from his horse, he retired to his own chamber. He instantly rubbed the lamp, and called the Genius as usual. He had not to wait; the Genius appeared directly, and offered his services. "Genius," said Aladdin to him, "I have hitherto had every reason to praise the precision and promptitude with which you have punctually executed whatever I have required of you, by means of the power of your mistress, this lamp. You must now, through your regard for her, appear, if possible, more zealous, and make greater despatch than you have yet done. I command you, therefore, to build me a palace in as short a time as you possibly can, opposite to that belonging to the sultan, and at a proper distance; and let this palace be every way worthy to receive the princess Badroulboudour, my bride. I leave the choice of the materials to yourself, that is to say, whether it shall be of porphyry, of jasper, of agate, of lapis lazuli, or of the finest and greatest variety of marbles—and also the form of the palace; I only expect that at the top of the palace there shall be erected a large saloon, with a dome in the centre, and four equal sides, the walls of which shall be formed of massive gold and silver, in alternate layers, with twenty-four windows, six on each side; that the lattices of each window, except one, which is to be purposely left unfinished, shall be enriched with diamonds, rubies, and emeralds, set with the greatest taste

and symmetry, and in such a style, that nothing in all the world can equal it. I wish also this palace to have a large court in the front, another behind, and a garden. But above everything else, be sure that there is a place, which you will point out to me, well supplied with money, both in gold and silver. There must also be kitchens, offices, magazines, receptacles for rich and valuable furniture, suited to the different seasons, and all appropriate to the magnificence of such a palace; and also stables, filled with the most beautiful horses, with the grooms and attendants; not omitting everything proper for hunting. I must likewise have attendants for the kitchen and offices, and female slaves, for the service of the princess. In short, you understand what I mean. Go, and return as soon as it is completed."

The sun had retired to rest by the time that Aladdin had finished giving his orders to the Genius respecting the construction of the palace he had thus in idea formed the plan of. The very next morning, when the day first broke, Aladdin, whose love for the princess prevented him from sleeping in tranquillity, had scarcely risen, before the Genius presented himself. "Sir," said he, "your palace is finished; come and see if it is as you wish." Aladdin had no sooner signified his assent, than the Genius transported him to it in an instant. He found it exceed his utmost expectation, and could not sufficiently admire it. The Genius conducted him through every part of it, and he everywhere found the greatest riches apphed with the utmost propriety. There were also the proper officers and slaves, all dressed according to their rank, and suited to their different employments. Amongst other things, he did not omit to show him the treasury, the door of which was opened by a treasurer, of whose fidelity the Genius confidently assured him. He here observed large vases, filled to the very top with purses of different sizes, according to the sums they contained, and so nicely arranged, that it was quite a pleasure to behold them. The Genius then carried Aladdin to the stables, where he made him take notice of the most beautiful horses in the world, with all the officers and grooms busily employed about them. He then led him into the different magazines, filled with everything that was necessary for them, both useful and ornamental, as well as for their support.

When Aladdin had examined the whole palace, without omitting a single part, from the top to the bottom, and more particularly the saloon with the four-and-twenty windows, and had seen all the riches and magnificence it contained, as well as every other thing, even in greater abundance and with greater propriety than he had ordered: "Genius," said he, "no one can be more satisfied than I am; and I should be very wrong to make the least complaint. There is one thing only, which I did not mention to you, because it escaped my recollection; it is, to have a carpet of the finest velvet laid from the gate of the sultan's palace up to the door of the apartment in this palace which is appropriated to the princess, that she may walk upon it when she leaves the sultan's palace." "I will return in an instant," replied the Genius; and he had not been gone a moment, before Aladdin saw what he wished done, though without knowing by what means. The Genius again made his appearance, and carried Aladdin back to his own house, just as the gates of the sultan's palace were about to be opened.

The porters who came to open the gates, and who were accustomed to see an open space where Aladdin's palace now stood, were much astonished at observing it filled up, and at seeing a velvet carpet, which came from that part directly opposite to the gate of the palace. They could not at first make out what it was; but their astonishment increased when they distinctly beheld the superb palace of Aladdin. The news of this wonderful event soon spread itself throughout the palace, and the grand vizier, who had arrived just as the

gates were open, was not less astonished than the rest. The first thing he did was to go to the sultan; but he wished to make the whole business pass for enchantment. "Why do you endeavour, vizier," replied the sultan, "to make this appear the effect of enchantment? You know as well as I do that it is the palace of Aladdin, which I, in your presence, yesterday, gave him permission to build for the reception of the princess my daughter. After the immense display of riches which we have seen, can you think it so very extraordinary that he should be able to build a palace in so short a time? He wished, no doubt, to surprise us, and we every day see what miracles riches can perform. Own to me that you wish, through motives of jealousy, to make this appear an enchantment." The hour for entering the council hall prevented the continuation of this conversation.

When Aladdin had returned, and dismissed the Genius, he found that his mother was up, and had begun to put on one of the dresses which he had ordered for her the day before. About the time that the sultan left the council, Aladdin requested his mother to go to the palace, attended by the same female slaves that the Genius had procured for her use. He desired her also, if she should see the sultan, to inform him that she came for the purpose of having the honour of accompanying the princess in the evening, when it was proper for her to go to her own palace. She then set out; but although she and her slaves were dressed as richly as any sultanas, there was less crowd to see them, as they were veiled, and the richness and magnificence of their habits were hidden by a sort of cloak, that quite covered them. Aladdin himself mounted his horse and left his paternal house, never more to return; but did not forget his wonderful lamp, whose assistance had been so highly advantageous to him, and had in fact been the cause of all his happiness. He went to his own palace in the same public manner, surrounded with all the pomp with which he had presented himself to the sultan on the preceding day.

As soon as the porters of the sultan's palace perceived the mother of Aladdin, they gave notice of it through the proper officer to the sultan himself. He immediately sent orders to the bands, who played upon trumpets, tymbals, tabors, and fifes, and hautboys, and who were already placed in different parts of the terrace, and in a moment the air echoed with their joyful sounds, and spread pleasure throughout the city. The merchants began to dress out their shops with rich carpets and seats, adorned with foliage, and to prepare illuminations for the night. The artificers quitted their work, and all the people thronged to the great square that still was left between the palaces of the sultan and Aladdin.

That of the latter first attracted their admiration, not merely because they had been accustomed to see only that of the sultan, which could not be put in comparison with Aladdin's; but their greater surprise arose from their not being able to comprehend by what unheard-of means they should be able to behold so magnificent a palace in a spot, where the day before there were neither any materials brought, nor any foundations laid.

Aladdin's mother met with the most honourable reception, and was introduced by the chief of the eunuchs into the apartment of the princess Badroulboudour. As soon as the latter perceived her, she ran and embraced her, and made her take a place upon her own sofa. And while her women were dressing her, and adorning her person with the most valuable of the jewels which Aladdin had presented her with, she entertained her with a most magnificent collation. The sultan, who wished to be as much as possible with the princess his daughter before she left him to go to the palace of Aladdin, paid great honour and respect to his mother. She had very often seen the sultan in public, but he had never yet seen her without her veil, as she then

was. And although she was of rather an advanced age, there were still to be observed some traces from which it might be concluded, she had in her youth been rather handsome. The sultan too, had always seen her very plainly, and indeed indifferently dressed, and he was therefore the more struck at finding her now as magnificent as the princess his daughter. He thence concluded that Aladdin was equally prudent and wise in all things.

When the evening approached, the princess took leave of the sultan her father. Their parting was tender, and accompanied by tears. They embraced each other several times without uttering a word: and the princess at last left her apartment, and began her march with Aladdin's mother on her left hand, followed by a hundred female slaves, all magnificently dressed. All the bands of instruments which had been incessantly heard since the arrival of Aladdin's mother, united at once and marched with them. These were followed by a hundred chious (a kind of officer), and an equal number of black eunuchs in two rows, with their proper officers at their head. Four hundred young pages belonging to the sultan, who marched in two troops on each side, with flambeaux in their hands, caused a great light. The brilliancy of these, joined to the illuminations in both palaces, well supplied the place of day.

In this order did the princess proceed, walking upon the carpet, which was spread from Aladdin's palace to the sultan's. And as she continued to advance, the musicians, who were at the head of the procession, went on and mixed with those who were placed on the terrace of Aladdin's palace, and thus formed a concert, which, confused and extraordinary as it was, augmented the general joy, not only amongst those in the open square, but in the two palaces, in all the city, and even to a considerable distance round.

The princess at length arrived at the new palace, and Aladdin ran with every expression of joy to the entrance of the apartments that were appropriated to her, in order to welcome her. His mother had taken care to point out her son to the princess, in the midst of the officers and attendants who surrounded him: and when she perceived him, her joy at finding him so handsome and well made was excessive. "Adorable princess," cried Aladdin, accosting her in a most respectful manner, "if I should have the misfortune to have displeased you by the temerity with which I have aspired to possess so amiable a person, and the daughter of my sultan, I must confess that it was to your beautiful eyes, and to your charms alone, that you must attribute it, and not to myself." "Prince, for it is thus that I must now call you," replied the princess, "I obey the will of the sultan my father: and it is enough to have seen you, to own that I obey him without reluctance."

Aladdin was delighted at so satisfactory and charming an answer, and did not suffer the princess to remain long standing, after having walked so far, which she was not in the habit of doing. He took her by the hand, which he kissed with the greatest demonstrations of joy, and conducted her into a large saloon illuminated by an immense number of tapers, where, through the attention of the Genius, there was a table spread with everything that was rare and excellent. The dishes were of massive gold, and filled with the most delicious viands. The vases, the basins, and the goblets, with which the side-board was amply furnished, were also of gold, and of the most exquisite workmanship. The other ornaments which embellished the saloon exactly corresponded with the richness of the other parts. The princess, enchanted at the sight of such an assemblage of riches in one place, said to Aladdin, "Nothing, I thought, prince, in the whole world was more beautiful than the palace of the sultan my father; but the sight of this saloon alone tells me I was deceived." "My princess," replied Aladdin, in placing her at the table in the seat he had destined for her, "I am very sensible of

your politeness, but at the same time know how to appropriate the compliment."

The princess Badroulboudour, Aladdin, and his mother, sat down, and instantly a band of the most harmonious instruments, played upon by females of great beauty, to whose voices they formed an accompaniment, began a concert, which lasted till the repast was finished. The princess was so delighted with it, that she said she had never heard anything to equal it in the palace of her father. But she knew not that these musicians were fairies, chosen by the Genius, the slave of the lamp.

When the supper was concluded, and everything had been removed with the greatest diligence, a troop of dancers of both sexes took the place of the musicians. They performed dances of various figures, as was the custom of the country, and concluded by one executed by a male and female, who danced with the most surprising activity and agility, and each of them gave the other in turn an opportunity of showing all the grace and address they were masters of. It was near midnight, when, according to the custom at that time observed in China, Aladdin rose and presented his hand to the princess Badroulboudour, in order to dance together, and thus finish the ceremony of their nuptials. They both danced with so good a grace that they were the admiration of all present. When it was over, Aladdin did not let the hand of the princess go, but they went into the chamber together in which the nuptial bed had been prepared. The women of the princess attended to undress her and put her to bed, while the attendants of Aladdin did the same, and then every one retired. In this manner did the ceremonies and rejoicings on account of the marriage of Aladdin and the princess Badroulboudour conclude.

The next morning when Aladdin awoke, his chamberlains presented themselves to dress him. They clothed him in quite a different habit, but one equally rich and magnificent, from what he wore on the day of his marriage. They then brought him one of the horses that were appropriated to his use. He mounted it and rode to the palace of the sultan, surrounded by a large troop of slaves. The sultan received him with the same honours he had done before; he embraced him, and after having placed him on the throne close by his side, he ordered breakfast to be served up. "Sire," said Aladdin to the sultan, "I beseech your majesty to dispense with my having this honour to-day; I come for the express purpose of entreating you to go and partake of a repast in the palace of the princess, together with you grand vizier and the nobles of your court." The sultan readily acceded to his request. He rose at the same instant, and as the distance was not great, he wished to go on foot. He proceeded therefore in this manner, with Aladdin on his right hand and the grand vizier on his left, followed by the nobles, with the chieftains and principal officers of his palace going before them.

The nearer the sultan came to the palace of Aladdin, the more was he struck with its beauty; yet this was but little to what he felt on entering. His expressions of surprise and pleasure continued in all the apartments through which he passed; but when they came to the saloon with twenty-four windows, to which Aladdin had requested them to ascend; when he had seen its ornaments, and had, above all things, cast his eyes on the lattices enriched with diamonds, rubies, and emeralds, all of the finest sort and most appropriate size; and when Aladdin had made him observe that the outside was equally rich and superb as the other, he was so much astonished that he stood absolutely motionless. After remaining some time in that state, "Vizier," he at length said to that minister, who was near him, "is it possible that there should be in my kingdom, and so near my own, so superb a palace, and yet that I should till this moment be ignorant of it?" "Your majesty," replied the grand vizier, "may

remember, that the day before yesterday you gave Aladdin, whom you then acknowledged for your son-in-law, permission to build a palace opposite to your own; on the same day, when the sun went down, not the smallest part of this palace was on this spot, and yesterday I had the honour to announce to your majesty that the palace was built and finished." "I remember it," replied the sultan, "but I never imagined that this palace would be one of the wonders of the world. Where throughout the universe will you find the walls built with alternate layers of massive gold and silver instead of stone or marble, and the windows having the lattices studded with diamonds, rubies, and emeralds? Never in the whole world has there been anything similar heard of."

The sultan wished to see more closely, and observe the beauty of the twenty-four lattices, when in reckoning them he only found twenty-three that were equally rich, and he was therefore in the greatest astonishment that the twenty-fourth should remain imperfect. "Vizier," said he, for that minister made it a point not to leave him, "I am very much surprised that so magnificent a saloon as this is should remain unfinished in this particular." "Sire," replied the grand vizier, "Aladdin apparently was pressed for time, and therefore was unable to finish this window like the rest. But it must be readily granted that he has jewels fit for the purpose, and that it will be finished the first opportunity."

Aladdin, who had left the sultan to give some orders, came and joined them during this conversation. "My son," said the sultan, "this truly is a saloon worthy the admiration of all the world. There is, however, one thing I am astonished at, and that is to observe this lattice unfinished. Is it through forgetfulness or neglect," added he, "or because the workmen have not had time to put the finishing stroke to such a beautiful specimen of architecture?" "Sire," answered Aladdin, "it is not for any of these reasons that this lattice remains in the state your majesty now sees it. It has been done on purpose, and it was by my orders that the workmen have not touched it. I wish that your majesty should have the glory of finishing this saloon and palace at the same time; and I entreat you to think well of my intention, that I may ever remember the favour I have thus received from you." "If you have done it with that view," replied the sultan, "I take it in good part; I will go this instant and give the necessary orders about it." In fact, he ordered the jewellers who were best furnished with precious stones, and the most skilful goldsmiths in his capital, to be sent for.

When the sultan came down from the saloon, Aladdin conducted him into that where he had entertained the princess Badroulboudour on the evening of their nuptials. The princess herself entered the moment after, and received the sultan her father in such a manner as made it very evident she was quite satisfied with her marriage. In this saloon there were two tables set out with the most delicious viands, all served up in services of gold. The sultan sat down at the first, and eat with his daughter, Aladdin, and the grand vizier. All the nobles of the court were regaled at the second, which was of great length. The repast highly pleased the sultan's taste, and he confessed that he had never partaken of anything more excellent. He said the same of the wine, which was in fact very delicious. But what excited his admiration most of all were four large recesses or sideboards, furnished and set out with a profusion of flagons, vases, and cups of solid gold, enriched throughout with precious stones. He was also delighted with the different bands of music placed in different parts of the saloon, while the trumpets, accompanied by tymbals and drums, were heard at a distance, at proper intervals, joining with the music within.

When the sultan rose from the table he was informed that the jewellers and goldsmiths whom he had ordered to be sent for were come. He then went up

to the saloon with twenty-four windows, and when there, he pointed out to the jewellers and goldsmiths who followed him, that window which was imperfect. "I have ordered you to come here," said the sultan, "to finish this window, and make it quite perfect like the rest. Examine them, and lose no time in completing it."

The jewellers and goldsmiths examined all the twenty-three lattices with great attention, and after having consulted together about what they could each contribute towards its completion, they presented themselves to the sultan, and the jeweller in ordinary to the palace thus addressed him: "We are ready, sire, to employ all our care and diligence to obey your majesty, but amongst all our profession we have not jewels either sufficiently valuable or numerous to complete so great a work." "I have, then," cried the sultan, "and more than you want. Come to my palace; I will show you them, and you shall choose which you like best."

When the sultan had got back to his palace, he made them bring to the jewellers all his jewels; and they took a great quantity of them, particularly of those which had been presented by Aladdin. They used up all those, without appearing to have made much progress. They went back for more several different times, and in the course of a month they had not finished more than half their work. They used all the sultan's jewels, with as many of the grand vizier's as he could spare, and with all these they could not do more than finish half the window.

Aladdin was well aware that all the sultan's endeavours to make the lattice of this window like the others were vain, and that he would never arrive at that honour: he went up therefore to the workmen, and not only made them stop working, but even undo all they had yet finished, and carry back all the jewels to the sultan and the grand vizier.

All the work, which the jewellers had been six weeks in performing, was destroyed in a few hours. They then went away, and left Aladdin alone in the saloon. He took out the lamp, which he had with him, and rubbed it. The Genius instantly appeared. "Genius," said Aladdin to him, "I ordered you to leave one of the twenty-four lattices of this saloon imperfect, and you obeyed me. I now inform you, I wish it to be made like the rest." The Genius disappeared, and Aladdin went out of the saloon. He entered it again in a few moments, and found the lattice as he wished, and similar to the others.

In the mean time the jewellers and goldsmiths arrived at the palace, and were introduced and presented to the sultan in his own apartment. The first jeweller then produced the precious stones he had brought with him, and said in the name of the rest, "Your majesty, sire, knows for what length of time, and how diligently we have worked, in order to finish the business your majesty employed us upon. It was already very far advanced, when Aladdin obliged us not only to leave off, but even to destroy what we have already done, and to bring back these jewels, as well as those that belonged to the grand vizier." The sultan then asked them whether Aladdin had given them any reason; and when they told the sultan he had said nothing on the subject, the former immediately ordered his horse to be brought. He mounted as soon as it came, and went without any other attendants than those who happened to be about his person, who accompanied him on foot. When he arrived at Aladdin's palace, he dismounted at the foot of the flight of stairs that led to the saloon with twenty-four windows. He immediately went up, without letting Aladdin know of his arrival: but the latter happened luckily to be in the saloon, and had barely time to receive the sultan at the door.

The sultan, without giving Aladdin time to chide him for not sending word of his intention to pay him a visit, and thus seeming deficient in the respect he

owed him, said, "I am come, my son, on purpose to ask the reason why you wished to leave this very magnificent and singular saloon in an unfinished state."

Aladdin dissembled the true reason, which was, that the sultan was not sufficiently rich in jewels to go to so great an expense. But to let him see how the palace itself surpassed not only his, but also every other palace in the whole world, since he was unable to finish even a very small part of it, he replied, "It is true, sire, that your majesty did behold this saloon unfinished, but I entreat you to examine if, at this moment, there be anything wanting."

The sultan immediately went to the window, where he had observed the lattice imperfect; but when he saw it was like the rest, he thought he was mistaken. He not only examined the window on each side of it, but looked at them all, one after the other; and when he was convinced that the lattice, upon which his people had so long employed themselves, and which had cost the jewellers and goldsmiths so many days, was finished in such an instant, he embraced Aladdin, and kissed him between his eyes. "My dear son," said he, filled with astonishment, "what a man are you, who can do such wonderful things, and almost, as it were, instantaneously. There is not your equal in the world; and the more I know you, the more I find to admire in you."

Aladdin received the sultan's praises with great modesty, and replied to them in these terms: "It is, sire, my greatest glory to deserve the kindness and approbation of your majesty, and I can assure you I will never neglect anything that will tend to make me still more worthy of your good opinion."

The sultan returned to the palace in the same way he came, and would not permit Aladdin to accompany him. When he got back, he found the grand vizier waiting his arrival. Still full of admiration at the wonder to which he had been witness, the sultan related everything to him in such terms, that the vizier did not doubt for a moment that the matter was exactly as the sultan told it. But this still more confirmed that minister in the belief which he already entertained, that the palace of Aladdin was built by enchantment; which opinion he had expressed to the sultan on the very morning that the palace was first seen. He again wished to repeat the same sentiments. "Vizier," said the sultan, suddenly interrupting him, "you have before said the same thing; but I very plainly perceive you have not forgotten my daughter's marriage with your son."

The grand vizier clearly saw that the sultan was prejudiced; he did not therefore wish to enter into any dispute with him, but suffered him to remain in his own opinion. Every morning, as soon as he rose, the sultan did not fail to go regularly to the apartment whence he could see the palace of Aladdin; and indeed he often went during the day to contemplate and admire it.

Aladdin himself, in the mean time, did not remain shut up in his palace, but took care to go through different parts of the city at least once every week: sometimes to attend prayers at various mosques; at others to visit the grand vizier, who regularly came on stated days to pay his pretended court; and sometimes he honoured with his presence the houses of the principal nobles, whom he frequently entertained at his own palace. Every time he went out he ordered two of the slaves, who attended him as he rode, to throw handfuls of gold in the streets and public places through which he passed, and where the people always collected in crowds to see him. Besides this, a poor person never presented himself before the gate of his palace but went away well satisfied.

Aladdin also so arranged his different occupations, that there was not a week in which he did not once, at least, take the diversion of the chase; sometimes hunting in the neighbourhood of the city, and at others going to a greater

distance; and he gave proofs of the same liberality on the roads and in the villages through which he passed. This generous disposition made the people load him with blessings; and it became the common custom to swear by his head. In short, without giving the least cause of displeasure to the sultan, to whom he very regularly paid his court, it may be asserted, that Aladdin had attracted, by the affability of his manners, and the liberality of his conduct, the regard and affection of every one; and that generally speaking, he was even more beloved than the sultan himself. To all these good qualities he joined a great degree of valour, and an ardent zeal for the good of the state, of which he had an opportunity of giving the strongest proof in a revolt that took place on the confines of the kingdom. He no sooner became apprised that the sultan meant to levy an army to quell it, than he requested to have the command of it. This he had no difficulty in obtaining. He instantly put himself at its head, marched against the rebels, and conducted the whole expedition with so much judgment and activity, that the sultan heard of their defeat, punishment, and dispersion, quite as soon as of the arrival of the army at its point of destination. This action, which made his name celebrated throughout the whole extent of the empire, did not in the least alter his disposition. He returned victorious, but possessed of as much affability and modesty as ever.

Many years passed, and Aladdin continued to conduct himself in the way we have described, when the African magician, who had procured for him, but without intending it, the means by which he was raised to so exalted a situation, frequently thought of him while he was in Africa, where he had returned. Although well persuaded that Aladdin had pined out a miserable existence in the subterraneous cavern where he had left him, he nevertheless thought he might as well learn the precise state of the case. As he had a complete knowledge of the science of geomancy, he took out of a drawer a sort of square covered box, such as he used when he made any observations in this science. He then sat down on the sofa, and placed the square instrument before him. He uncovered it, and after making the sand, with which it was filled, quite smooth and even, with the view of discovering whether Aladdin died in the subterraneous cave, he arranged the points, drew the figures, and formed his horoscope. When he examined it, in order to form his judgment, instead of finding Aladdin dead in the cave, he discovered that he had got out of it, that he lived in the greatest splendour, was immensely rich, highly respected and honoured, and was the husband of a princess.

No sooner had the African magician learnt by his diabolical art that Aladdin was in the enjoyment of these honours, than the blood rushed into his face. "This miserable son of a tailor," he exclaimed in a rage, "has discovered the secret and virtues of the lamp. I thought his death certain; and now he enjoys the fruits of my long and laborious exertions. I will either prevent his enjoying them long, or perish in the attempt." He did not deliberate a long time as to the method he should pursue. Early the next morning he mounted a horse from Barbary, which he had in his stable, and began his journey. Travelling from city to city, and from province to province, without stopping anywhere longer than was necessary to rest his horse, he at last arrived in China, and soon reached the capital where the sultan lived, whose daughter Aladdin had married. He alighted at a public khan, where he ordered an apartment for himself. He remained there the rest of the day and following night, in order to recover from the fatigue of his journey.

The first thing the African magician did the next morning was to inquire what was the general opinion formed of Aladdin, and how the people spoke of him. In walking about the city, he went into the most frequented and best-known place, where people of the greatest consequence and distinction assembled,

to drink a warm liquor of a particular kind, which he recollected to have done when he was there before. He had no sooner taken his place than they poured some out into a cup, and presented it to him. As he took it he heard, as he was listening to what was said on every side, some persons speaking of Aladdin's palace. When he had finished his cup, he approached those who were conversing on this subject, and, taking his opportunity, he inquired what there was in particular about this palace of which they spoke so highly. "Whence come you?" said one of those to whom he addressed himself. "You must surely be but lately arrived in this city, if you have not seen or even heard of the palace of Prince Aladdin. I do not say," continued the same person, "that it is one of the wonders of the world, but that it is the only wonder in the world. Nothing has ever been seen so rich, so grand, or so magnificent. You must have come from a great distance, since you seem never even to have heard of it. But see it, and you will then know if I have said anything but the truth." "Pardon my ignorance, I beg of you," replied the African magician; "I arrived here only yesterday, and I have come from the furthest part of Africa, and the fame of it had not reached that spot when I left it. And as it was business of great importance that brought me, and required the utmost haste, I had no other view during my journey than to get to the end of it as soon as possible, without stopping anywhere, or acquiring any information as I came along: I was therefore quite ignorant of what you have been telling me. I shall not, however, fail to go and see it. My impatience indeed is so great that I would this moment go and satisfy my curiosity, if you would do me the favour to show me the way."

The person to whom the African magician addressed himself took a pleasure in pointing out to him the way, and he immediately set out. When he arrived, and had accurately examined the palace on all sides, he had not the least doubt but that Aladdin had availed himself of the power of the lamp in building it. Without, therefore, at all thinking of the inability of Aladdin, the son of a tailor, he well knew it was in the power of the Genii who were the slaves of the lamp, to produce such wonders, the acquisition of which had so narrowly escaped him. Stung to the very soul by the happiness and greatness of Aladdin, between whom and the sultan there seemed not the shadow of a difference, he returned to the khan where he had taken up his abode.

The great thing to discover was the particular situation of the lamp, and whether Aladdin carried it about with him, or where he kept it; and this discovery he was able to make by a certain operation in geomancy. As soon, therefore, as he got back to his lodging, he took his square box and his sand, which he always carried with him wherever he went. Having completed the operation, he found that the lamp was in Aladdin's palace, and his joy was so great on knowing this that he could hardly contain himself. "I shall get this lamp," he cried, "and I defy Aladdin to prevent my obtaining it, and compelling him to sink to that native obscurity and poverty from which he has taken so high a leap."

It happened most unfortunately for Aladdin, that he was absent upon a hunting expedition that was to last eight days, and only three of them were yet elapsed. Of this the African magician got information in the following way. When he had finished the operation which had afforded him so much joy, he went to see the master of the khan, under the pretence of conversing with him, and he had no difficulty in finding a proper subject. He told him that he was just returned from the palace of Aladdin; and after giving him an exaggerated account of all the most remarkable and surprising things he saw, and such as generally attracted the attention of every one, "My curiosity," he added, "goes still further, and I shall not be satisfied till I have seen the master to whom so

wonderful a building belongs." "That will not be at all a difficult matter," replied the keeper of the khan, "for hardly a day passes that will not afford you an opportunity when he is at home; but he has been gone these three days on a grand hunting party, which is to last at least eight."

The African magician did not want to know more; he took leave of the master of the khan, and returned to his own apartment. "This is the time for action," said he to himself, "nor must I let it escape." He then went to the shop of a person who made and sold lamps. "I want," said he to the master, "a dozen copper lamps; can you supply me with them?" The man replied that he had not quite so many finished, but that if he would wait till the next day he would have them ready for him at any time he wished. The magician agreed to wait, and desired him to take care and have them very well polished: and having first promised to give a good price for them, he returned to the khan.

The next morning, the African magician received the twelve lamps, and paid him the money he asked for them, without making him abate any part of it. He put them into a basket, which he had provided for the express purpose, and went with this on his arm towards Aladdin's palace; and when he was near it, he began to cry with a loud voice, "Who will change old lamps for new?" As he kept going on, the children who were at play in the open square, heard him; they ran and collected round him, hooting and shouting at him, as they took him for a fool or a madman. Every one who passed laughed at his folly, as they thought it. "That man," said they, "must surely have lost his senses, to offer to change new lamps for old ones."

The African magician was not at all surprised at the shouts of the children, nor at anything that was said of him. He continued to repeat his cry so often, while he walked backwards and forwards on all sides of the palace, that at last the princess Badroulboudour, who was in the saloon with twenty-four windows, heard his voice; but as she could not distinguish what he said, on account of the shouting of the children, who followed him, and whose number increased every instant, she sent one of her female slaves, who went close to him, in order to understand what was the reason of all the noise and bustle.

It was not long before the female slave returned, and entered the saloon laughing heartily; indeed, so much so, that the princess herself in looking at her, could not help laughing also. "Well, silly one," said the princess, "why do you not tell me what you are laughing at?" "Princess," replied the slave, still laughing, "who can possibly help laughing, at seeing that fool with a basket on his arm, full of beautiful new lamps, which he does not wish to sell, but exchange for old ones. It is the crowd of children who surround him that make all the noise we hear, in mocking him."

Hearing this account, another of the female slaves said, "Now you speak of old lamps, I know not whether the princess has taken notice of one that lies upon the cornice: whomever it belongs to, he will not be very much displeased in finding a new one instead of that old one. If the princess will give me leave, she may have the pleasure of trying whether this fellow is fool enough to give a new lamp for an old one, without asking anything for the exchange."

This lamp, of which the slave spoke, was the very wonderful lamp which had been the cause of Aladdin's great success and happiness: and he had himself placed it upon the cornice, before he went to the chase, from the fear of losing it. It was the usual precaution which he took every time he hunted. But neither the female slaves, the eunuchs, nor the princess herself, had paid the least attention to it during his absence till this moment. Except when he hunted, Aladdin always carried it about him. His precaution, it may be said, was certainly very proper; but he should at least have locked the lamp up.

That is all very true ; but every one is liable to similar neglects, and always will be liable to them.

The princess, who was ignorant of the value of this lamp, and that Aladdin, not to say herself, was so much interested in its preservation, consented to the joke, and ordered a eunuch to go and get it exchanged. The eunuch obeyed : he went down from the saloon, and no sooner came out at the palace gate, than he perceived the African magician. He immediately called to him, and when he came, he showed him the old lamp, and said, "Give me a new lamp for this."

The magician did not doubt but that this was the lamp he was seeking, because he thought there would not of course be any other lamp in Aladdin's palace, where everything, that could be, was of gold and silver. He eagerly took the lamp from the eunuch, and after having thrust it as far as he could into his bosom, he presented his basket, and bade him take which he liked best. The eunuch chose one, and, leaving the magician, he carried the new lamp to the princess. This change had no sooner taken place, than the children made the whole square resound with their noise, in ridiculing and mocking, as they thought, the folly of the magician.

The African magician let them shout as much as they pleased, but without staying any longer near Aladdin's palace, he insensibly went to a distance, ceased his noise, and no longer invited people to change old lamps for new. He wished for no other than what he had got. His silence therefore soon induced the children to go no further with him.

As soon as he was out of the square, between the two palaces, he went along the most unfrequented streets ; and as he had no further occasion for the remainder of his lamps or his basket, he set them down in the middle of a street, where he thought no one would see him. He then turned down another street, and made all the haste he could to get to one of the gates of the city. As he continued his walk through the suburb, which was very extensive, he bought some provisions before he left it. And when he was in the open country, he turned down a by-road, where there was not a probability of seeing any person ; and here he remained, till he thought a good opportunity occurred to execute the design he had in coming there. He did not regret the horse he left at the khan where he lodged, but thought himself well recompensed by the treasure he had acquired.

The African magician passed the remainder of the day in the same spot, and stayed also until the night was far advanced. He then drew the lamp out of his bosom, and rubbed it. The Genius instantly obeyed the summons. "What do you wish ?" cried the Genius : "I am ready to obey you as your slave, and the slave of those who have the lamp in their hands, both I, and the other slaves of the lamp." "I command you," replied the African magician, "instantly to take the palace which you and the other slaves of the lamp have erected in this city, exactly as it is, with everything in it, both dead and alive, and transport it, with me at the same time, into the farther part of Africa." Without making any answer, the Genius, assisted by the other slaves of the lamp, took both him and the whole palace, and transported it in a very short time to the very spot he had pointed out.

It is now necessary to leave the African magician, the princess Badroulboudour, and the palace in Africa, and take notice of the sultan's surprise.

The sultan no sooner rose the next morning, than he did not fail, as usual, to go to the cabinet and look out, that he might have the pleasure of contemplating and admiring Aladdin's palace. He cast his eyes towards the side where he was accustomed to see this palace, but discovered only an open space, such as it was before it had been built. He thought he must be deceived : he

rubbed his eyes, but still he could see nothing more than at first, though the air was so serene, the sky so clear, and the sun so near rising, that every object was very distinct and plain. He looked on both sides, and out of both windows, but could not perceive what he had been accustomed to. His astonishment was so great, that he remained for some time in the same place with his eyes turned to the spot where the palace had stood, but where he could no longer see it, endeavouring to comprehend what was beyond his power; that is, how so large and so visible a palace as that of Aladdin's, which he had constantly seen every day since he had given permission to have it erected—and even so lately as the day before—should so suddenly and completely vanish, that not the smallest vestige remained. "I cannot be deceived," he said to himself: "it was in this very place that I beheld it. If it had fallen down, the materials at least would have appeared; and if the earth had swallowed it, we should have perceived some marks of it." In whatever way this had come to pass, and however satisfied he was that the palace was no longer there, he nevertheless waited some time to see if, in reality, he was not deceived. He at length retired, after looking once more behind him as he left the place. He returned to his apartment, and ordered his grand vizier to be instantly sent for. In the mean time he sat down, his mind agitated with so many different thoughts, he knew not what part to take.

The grand vizier did not make the sultan wait long. He came in so much haste, that neither he nor his attendants in the least observed as they passed, that the palace of Aladdin was no longer in the same place. Even the porters when they opened the gates did not perceive the difference.

"Sire," said the grand vizier the moment he entered, "the eagerness and haste with which your majesty has sent for me, leads me to suppose that something very extraordinary has happened, since your majesty is not ignorant that this is the day when the council meets, and that I should therefore, of course, have been here on my duty in a very short time." "What has happened is indeed very extraordinary, as you have said; and you will soon agree it is so. Tell me, where is Aladdin's palace?" "I have just now passed it, sire," replied the vizier, with the utmost surprise; "and it seemed to me to be in the same spot. A building so solid as that is cannot easily change its situation." "Go into my cabinet," answered the sultan, "and come and tell me if you can see it."

The grand vizier went as he was ordered; and the very same thing happened to him as to the sultan. When he was quite sure that the palace of Aladdin did not stand in the place where it was, and that not the smallest part of it seemed to remain, he returned to the sultan. "Well," demanded the latter, "have you seen Aladdin's palace?" "Your majesty, sire, may remember," replied the grand vizier, "that I had the honour to tell you that this palace, which was so much and so deservedly admired for its beauty and immense riches, was the work of magic; but your majesty did not then pay any attention to what I said."

The sultan, who could not deny the former representations of the grand vizier, was in the greater rage, because he was also unable to disavow his own incredulity. "Where is this impostor?" he exclaimed, "this wretch, that I may strike off his head?" "It is some days," answered the grand vizier, "since he came to take leave of your majesty; we must send to him to inquire about his palace: he cannot be ignorant where it is." "This would be to treat him with too great indulgence," exclaimed the monarch; "go, and order thirty of my horsemen to bring him before me in chains." The grand vizier instantly gave the orders, and instructed their officer how they might prevent his escape and take him. They set out and met Aladdin, who was returning from the

chase, about five or six leagues from the city. The officer, when he first accosted him, said that the sultan was so impatient to see him again, that he had sent them to inform him of it, and to accompany him on his return.

Aladdin had not the least suspicion of the true cause that had brought this detachment of the sultan's guard. He continued hunting on his way home; but when he was within half a league of the city, the detachment surrounded him, and the officer then said, "Prince Aladdin, it is with the greatest regret that I must inform you of the orders we have received from the sultan, to arrest and conduct you like a state criminal. We entreat you not to take it ill in us that we do our duty, but on the contrary, that you will pardon us." This declaration astonished Aladdin to the greatest degree. He felt himself innocent, and asked the officer if he knew of what crime he was accused; but he replied, that neither he nor his men were acquainted with it.

As Aladdin perceived that his own attendants were much inferior to the detachment, and even that they went to some distance, he dismounted, and said to the officer, "Here I am, execute whatever orders you have received. I must however aver, that I am guilty of no crime, either towards the person of the sultan or the state." They immediately put a large and long chain about his neck, which they then bound round his body, so that he had not the use of his arms. When the officer had put himself at the head of the troop, one of the horsemen took hold of the end of the chain, and going on behind the officer, he led Aladdin, who was obliged to follow on foot; and in this state he was conducted through the city.

When the guards entered the suburbs, the first person who saw Aladdin conducted in this way, like a state criminal, did not doubt but that he was going to lose his head. As he was generally beloved, some seized a sabre, others whatever arms they could, and those who had none took up stones, and in this manner followed the guards. Some of those who were in the rear wheeled about, as if they wished to disperse them, but the people increased so fast, that the guards thought it better to dissemble, well satisfied if they could conduct Aladdin safe to the palace without his being rescued. In order to succeed the better, they took great care, as the streets happened to be more or less wide, to occupy the whole space, sometimes extending and at others compressing themselves. In this manner they arrived in the open square before the palace, where they all formed into one line, and faced about towards the armed multitude, while the officer and guard who led Aladdin, entered the palace, and the porters shut the gates to prevent any one from entering.

Aladdin was conducted before the sultan, who waited for him, accompanied by the grand vizier, in a balcony. And he no sooner saw him than he commanded the executioner, who was already present by his orders, to strike off his head, as he wished not to hear a word or any explanation whatever.

When the executioner had seized Aladdin, he took off the chain that was round his neck and body; and after laying down on the ground a large piece of leather, stained with the blood of the many criminals he had executed, he desired him to place himself on his knees, and then tied a bandage over his eyes. Having drawn his sabre, he was about to give the fatal stroke, only making the three usual flourishes in the air, and waiting for the sultan's signal to separate Aladdin's head from his body.

At this very instant the grand vizier perceived that the populace, who had forced the guards and filled the square, were in fact scaling the walls of the palace in many places, and had even begun to pull them down in order to open a passage. Before, therefore, the sultan could give the signal, he said to him, "I beseech your majesty to think maturely of what you are going to do. You will run the risk, sire, of having your palace forced; and if this misfortune

should happen, the event cannot but be dreadful." "My palace forced!" replied the sultan, "who can dare attempt it?" "If your majesty, sire, will cast your eyes towards the walls in that part, you will acknowledge the truth of what I say."

When the sultan saw such eager and violent commotions, his fear was very great. He instantly ordered the executioner to put up his sabre, to take the bandage off Aladdin's eyes, and set him at liberty. He also commanded an officer to proclaim that he pardoned Aladdin, and that every one might retire.

As all those who had mounted on the walls of the palace were witnesses of what passed, they gave over their design, and almost directly got down; and, highly delighted at having thus been the means of saving the life of one whom they really loved, they instantly published this news to those who were near them; thence it spread through all the populace who were in the neighbourhood of the palace. The officers also, who ascended the terraced roof to proclaim the same thing, completed its publicity. The justice the sultan had thus rendered Aladdin by pardoning him, disarmed the populace, quieted the tumult, and every one by degrees returned home.

When Aladdin found himself at liberty, he lifted up his head towards the balcony, and perceiving the sultan, he raised his voice, and addressed him in the most pathetic manner. "I entreat your majesty," he said, "to add a new favour to the pardon you have just granted me, and that is, to inform me of my crime." "What thy crime is, perfidious wretch!" replied the sultan, "dost thou not know it? Come up here, and I will show thee."

Aladdin ascended, and when he presented himself, "Follow me," said the sultan, walking on before, without taking any other notice of him. He led the way to the cabinet that opened towards the place where Aladdin's palace stood. When they came to the door: "Go in," said the sultan; "you ought to know where your own palace is. Look on all sides, and tell me what is become of it." Aladdin looked, but saw nothing. He perceived the space which his palace did occupy; but as he could not conceive how it should have disappeared, this extraordinary and wonderful event so confused and astonished him, that he could not answer the sultan a single word. "Tell me," said the latter, impatient at his silence, "where is your palace, and what has become of my daughter?" "Sire," replied Aladdin, at last breaking silence, "I plainly see, and must own, that the palace which I built is no longer in the place where it was. I see it has disappeared; but I can assure your majesty, that I have no concern whatever in this event."

"I care not what is become of your palace; that gives me no pain," replied the sultan; "I esteem my daughter a million times beyond it; unless, therefore, you discover and bring her again to me, no consideration shall yet prevent my taking off your head." "Sire," said Aladdin, "I entreat your majesty to grant me forty days to make the most diligent inquiries, and if I do not during this period succeed in my search, I give you my word, that I will lay my head at the foot of your throne, that you may dispose of me according to your pleasure." "I grant your request," answered the sultan, "but do not think to abuse my favour, and endeavour to escape my resentment. In whatever part of the world you are, I will take care to discover you."

Aladdin then left the sultan's presence in the deepest humiliation, and in a state truly deserving of pity. He passed through the courts of the palace with downcast eyes, not even daring to look about him, so great was his confusion; and the principal officers of the court, not one of whom had he ever disobliged, instead of coming to console him or offer him a retreat at their houses, turned their backs upon him, both that they might not be supposed to see him, nor be able to recognise them. But even if they had

approached him in order to console him, or offer him an asylum, they themselves would not have known him : he did not even know himself. His mind seemed deranged, of which he gave evident proofs when he was out of the palace, for without thinking of what he did, he demanded at every door, and of all he met, if they had seen his palace, or could give him any intelligence of it.

These questions made every one think that Aladdin had lost his senses. Some even laughed at him ; but the more serious, and especially all those who had been on friendly terms, or ever had any business with him, most sincerely compassionated him. He remained three days in the city, walking through every part, eating only what was given him in charity, without being able to form any resolution.

At length, as Aladdin could not in his wretched state remain any longer in the city where he had hitherto lived in such splendour, he departed towards the country. He soon turned out of the high road, and after walking over a great deal of ground in the most dreadful state of mind, he arrived, towards the close of day, on the borders of a river. He now gave himself up entirely to despair. "Whither shall I go to seek my palace?" he exclaimed to himself. "In what country, in what part of the world shall I find either that or my dear princess, whom the sultan demands of me? Never shall I be able to succeed." It is much better then that I at once free myself from all my labours, which must end in nothing, and all the cutting sensations that distract me." He was then going to throw himself into the river, according to his resolution ; but being a good Mussulman, and faithful to his religion, he thought he ought not to do so, without first repeating his prayers. In order to perform this ceremony he went close to the bank to wash his face and hands, as was the custom of his country, but as this spot was rather steep, and the ground moist from the water that had washed against it, he slipped down, and would have fallen into the river if he had not been stopped by a piece of stone or rock, that projected about two feet from the surface. Happy was it for him too that he still had with him the ring which the African magician had put upon his finger when he made him go down into the subterraneous cavern, to bring away the precious lamp, which was so near remaining buried with him. In holding against the piece of rock, he rubbed the ring so strongly, that the same Genius instantly appeared whom he had before seen in the subterraneous cavern. "What do you wish?" cried the Genius: "I am ready to obey you as your slave, and as the slave of him who has that ring upon his finger, both I and the other slaves of the ring."

Aladdin was most agreeably surprised by a sight he so little expected in the despair he was in; and directly replied, "Save my life, Genius, a second time, by informing me where the palace is, which I have built, or in procuring it to be again placed where it was." "What you require of me," answered the Genius, "is beyond my ability: I am only the slave of the ring; you must address yourself to the slave of the lamp." "If that be the case, then," replied Aladdin, "at least transport me to the spot where my palace is, let it be in what part of the world it will; and place me under the window of the princess Badroulboudour." He had barely said this, before the Genius took and transported him to Africa, near a large city, and in the midst of a large meadow, in which the palace stood, and set him down directly under the windows of the apartment of the princess, and there left him. All this was the work of an instant.

Notwithstanding the obscurity of the night, Aladdin very readily recognised both his own palace and the apartment of the princess: but as the night was far advanced, and everything in the palace was quiet, he retired to one side,

and seated himself at the foot of a tree. Full of hopes, and reflecting on the good fortune which chance alone had procured him, he here felt himself in a much more tranquil state than since he had been arrested by the sultan's order, brought before him, and again delivered from the danger of losing his head. He amused himself for some time with these agreeable thoughts; but as he had for five or six days enjoyed hardly any rest, he could not prevent himself from being overcome by sleep, and he resigned himself to its influence on the spot where he was.

The next morning, as soon as the sun appeared above the horizon, Aladdin was most agreeably awakened by the notes of the birds which had perched for the night, not only upon the tree under which he lay, but also among the other thick trees in the garden of his palace. He cast his eyes upon this beautiful building, and felt an inexpressible joy at the thoughts of being again master of it, and once more possessing his dear princess. He got up and approached the apartment of the princess. He walked for some time under the window, waiting till she rose, in hopes that she might observe him. While in expectation of this, he considered within himself what could have been the cause of his misfortune; and after meditating some time, he entertained no doubt but that it arose from his having left his lamp. He accused himself of negligence and carelessness in having suffered the lamp to be out of his possession a single moment. He was, however, the most embarrassed in discovering who could be so jealous of his happiness. He would at once have comprehended it if he had known that both he and his palace were in Africa; but the Genius, who was the slave of the ring, had not informed him. The name alone of Africa would have brought his declared enemy the magician to his recollection.

The princess Badroulboudour rose this morning much earlier than she had yet done, since she had been transported into Africa by the artifice of the magician, whose sight she was compelled to endure once every day, as he was master of the palace; but she constantly treated him so ill, that he had never yet had the boldness to sleep there. When she was dressed, one of her women looking through the lattice, perceived Aladdin, and instantly ran and informed her mistress. The princess, who could scarcely believe the fact, immediately went to the window and saw him herself. She opened the lattice, the noise of which made Aladdin raise his head. He instantly recognised her, and saluted her in a manner highly expressive of his joy. "Lose not a moment," cried the princess; "they are gone to open the secret door, ascend this instant." She then shut the lattice.

This secret door was directly below the apartment of the princess. It was open, and Aladdin entered her apartment. It is impossible to express the joy they both felt in again seeing each other, after having concluded they were for ever separated. They embraced each other with tears of joy many times, and gave all imaginable proofs of the tenderest affection, after so cruel and so unforeseen a separation. They at length sat down. "Before you mention anything else, my princess," said Aladdin, "tell me in the name of God, as well for your own sake, and for that of the sultan your ever-respected father, as for mine, what has become of that old lamp which I placed upon the cornice of the saloon with twenty-four windows before I went on the hunting party?" "Ah, my dear husband," replied the princess, "I doubt very much whether our mutual misfortunes have not arisen from that lamp; and what the more distresses me is, that I am myself the cause of it." "Do not, princess," resumed Aladdin, "attribute the matter to yourself; I only am to blame, for I ought to have been more careful in its preservation. But let us now only think of repairing that loss: and for this purpose inform me, I beg of you, of everything that has happened, and into whose hands this lamp has fallen."

The princess then related to Aladdin everything that had passed, relative to the exchange of the old lamp for the new one, which she showed him; and how on the following night, after having been sensible of the removal of the palace, she found herself the next morning in the unknown country, where she was now speaking to him; and that this country was Africa, a fact she had learnt from the traitor who, by his magic art, had transported her there.

"Princess," replied Aladdin, interrupting her, "by informing me that we are in Africa, you have at once unmasked the traitor. He is the most infamous of men. But this is neither a proper time nor place to enter into a detail of his crimes. I entreat you only to tell me what he has done with the lamp, and where he has put it." "He constantly," rejoined the princess, "carries it carefully wrapped up in his bosom. I am sure of this, because he once took it out in my presence, showing it as a sort of trophy."

"Do not be offended, my princess," continued Aladdin, "at all the questions I put to you; they are of equal importance to us both. But to come at once to what most interests me: tell me, I conjure you, how you have been treated by so infamous and perfidious a wretch." "Since I have been in this place," answered the princess, "he has presented himself before me only once during the day; and I am persuaded that the little satisfaction he has derived from his visits makes him repeat them less often. All that he has ever said to me has only been for the purpose of persuading me to be faithless to you, and to take him for my husband; wishing to convince me that I ought never to expect to see you again; that you are no longer alive, and that the sultan my father has ordered your head to be cut off. And to prove to me that you were an ungrateful wretch, he said that you owed all your good fortune to him, with a thousand other injurious expressions that I cannot repeat. And as he never had any other answer than my complaints and tears afforded him, he was obliged to retire with as little satisfaction as he came. I have nevertheless no doubt but that he means to suffer the most violent effects of my affliction to subside, with the hope and expectation that I shall change my mind, and, if in the end I should persevere in my resistance, to make use of violent methods; but your presence, my dear husband, at once dissipates all my fears."

"Princess," interrupted Aladdin, "I trust you will not be deceived, as I think I have discovered the means of delivering you from our common enemy. For this purpose, however, I must go into the town; I will return about noon, and communicate to you the nature of my design, for you must yourself contribute towards its success. Let me, however, apprise you not to be astonished if you see me return in a different dress; and be sure you give orders that I may not be obliged to wait at the private door, but be admitted the instant I knock." The princess promised that somebody should be ready to open it on his arrival.

As soon as Aladdin had left the palace, he looked about on all sides, and at last discovered a peasant who was going into the country. Aladdin hastened to overtake him, and as soon as he joined him, he proposed to change clothes, and made him such an offer that the peasant readily agreed to it. This took place behind a small bush; and when the exchange was completed they separated, and Aladdin took the road that led to the town. When he got there, he turned down a street which led from the gate, and then getting in those streets which were most frequented, he came to that part where each street was occupied by a particular profession or trade. He went into that appropriated to druggists, and going to the shop which appeared the largest and best supplied, he asked the owner if he had a certain powder, the name of which he mentioned.

The merchant, who, from looking at Aladdin's dress, did not conceive that he had money enough to pay for it, replied, that he had it, but that it was very

dear. Aladdin readily entered into the merchant's thoughts, and therefore took out his purse, and showing him the gold, desired to have half a drachm of the powder. The merchant weighed it, wrapped it up, and giving it to Aladdin, demanded one piece of gold for it. The latter immediately paid him, and without stopping any longer in the town than was necessary to take some nourishment, returned to the palace. He had no occasion to wait at the secret door : it was instantly opened, and he went up to the apartment of the princess Badroulboudour. "The aversion, my princess," said Aladdin to her as soon as he came in, "which you have expressed for your ravisher may probably occasion you some pain in complying with the instructions I am going to give you. But permit me in the first place to tell you that it is necessary for you to dissemble, and even offer some violence to your own feelings, if you wish to be delivered from his persecution, and afford to the sultan your father, and my sovereign, the satisfaction of again beholding you.

"If you will follow my advice," continued Aladdin, "you will this moment begin to adorn yourself in one of your most elegant dresses, and when the African magician shall come, make no difficulty in receiving him with all the affability you can assume, without appearing affected or under any constraint, in a kind of open manner, yet still with some remains of grief, which he may easily conceive will soon be entirely dissipated. In your conversation with him, give him to understand that you are making the greatest efforts to forget me ; and that he may be still more convinced of your sincerity, invite him even to sup with you, and tell him that you are desirous of tasting some of the best wine this country can produce. On this he will not fail to leave you in order to procure some. While he is gone, do you go the sideboard, which will of course be set out, and put into one of the cups you usually drink out of, this powder ; set the cup on one side, and tell one of your women to fill it, and bring it to you at a certain signal, which you must explain to her, warning her not to make any mistake. When the magician shall be returned, and you shall again have sat down to table, after having eaten and drunk as much as you think proper, make them bring you the particular goblet in which the powder was put, and then do you make an exchange with him. He will find the flavour of that you give him so excellent, he will not refuse it, but drink it up to the last drop. Scarcely shall he have emptied the cup, but you will see him fall backwards. If you should feel any repugnance at drinking out of his cup, you need only pretend to do so, and you can very easily manage this, for the effect of the powder will be so sudden, that he will not have time to pay any attention to what you do, or whether you drink or not."

When Aladdin had finished his instructions, the princess answered, "I must confess that I shall violently shock my own feelings in agreeing to make these advances to the magician, although I am aware they are absolutely necessary. But what cannot I resolve to undertake against such a cruel enemy ? I will then do as you direct, since your happiness depends upon it as well as mine." When these matters were all arranged with the princess, Aladdin took his leave, and passed the remainder of the day in the neighbourhood of the palace, and as the night came on he approached the secret door.

The princess Badroulboudour, feeling herself inconsolable not only at her separation from her husband, whom from the first she loved more through inclination than duty, but also at being separated from the sultan her father, between whom and herself there was an equal degree of affection, had hitherto completely neglected her person from the very moment she knew of this distressful separation. She had even neglected that neatness and cleanliness so becoming to persons of her sex, particularly since the first visit of the magician, and when she had learnt from her women that he was the person who had exchanged

the old lamp for a new one; after this infamous trick, therefore, she could not look upon him without horror. The opportunity, however, of taking that vengeance upon him he so justly deserved, so much sooner than she could possibly even hope to have the means of accomplishing it, made her resolve to satisfy Aladdin.

As soon, therefore, as he was gone, she went to her toilet, and made her women dress her in the most becoming manner. Having put on one of her richest habits, she consulted her mirror, and asked the opinion of her women upon her appearance; and finding herself not deficient in any of the charms which might flatter the foolish passion of the African magician, she seated herself upon the sofa in expectation of his arrival.

The magician did not fail to make his appearance at the usual hour. As soon as the princess saw him come into the saloon with the twenty-four windows, where she was waiting to receive him, she got up in all the splendour of her youth and beauty. She pointed with her hand to the most honourable seat, and remained standing till he had reached it, that she might sit down at the same time. This distinguished civility she had never before shown him.

The African magician, more dazzled by the lustre of her eyes than by the brilliancy of the jewels she wore, was smitten to the heart. Her majestic air, the gracious manner she put on, so opposite to the rebuffs he had hitherto met with from her, absolutely confused him. He at first wished to sit at the very end of the sofa; but as he saw that the princess declined taking her seat until he was seated where she wished, he at last obeyed.

No sooner was he in his place than the princess, in order to free him from the embarrassment in which she saw he was, glanced at him in such a manner as to make him suppose she no longer beheld him in an odious point of view, and then said to him, "You are, doubtless, astonished at seeing me appear to-day quite like a different person from what I have hitherto done; but you will no longer be surprised at it, when I tell you that I am naturally of a disposition so much the reverse of grief, melancholy, vexation, or distress, that I endeavour to drive them from me by every means in my power, as soon as the cause of them has been a short time over. I have reflected upon what you have said respecting the destiny of Aladdin, and from the disposition of the sultan my father, which I well know, I am persuaded, like yourself, that the former could not possibly escape the terrible effects of his rage. I conclude, therefore, that even if I were to weep and lament all the remainder of my life, that my tears would not revive him; it is, then, on this account, that, after having paid him, even to the tomb, every respect and duty which affection required, I thought I should at length search for the means of consoling myself. These are the motives which have produced the change you see. In order, then, to begin to drive away all sorrow, which I have now resolved to banish from my mind, and being persuaded that you will assist me in the endeavours, I have ordered a supper to be prepared; but as I have only some wine which is the produce of China, and am now in Africa, I have a great desire to taste what is made here, and I thought if there were any, that you would be most likely to have the best.

The African magician, who had conceived it impossible so soon and so easily to acquire the good graces of the princess, failed not to tell her that he was unable sufficiently to express how sensible he was of her goodness; and to put an end to her conversation, from which he would find it difficult to disengage himself if it continued any longer, he adverted to the wine of Africa which she had mentioned, and told her that among the many advantages which that country enjoyed, that of producing most excellent wine was the principal, particularly in the part where she then was; and that he had some seven years old

that was not yet broached, and that it was not saying too much to aver that it surpassed all others in the whole world. "If my princess," added he, "will permit me, I will go and bring two bottles, and will return in an instant." "I should be sorry to give you that trouble," replied the princess; "it would be better surely to send some one." "It is necessary for me to go myself," resumed the magician; "no one but myself has the key of the cellar; nor does any one else know the secret of opening it." "The longer you are gone, the more impatient shall I be to see you again: remember, that we sit down to table on your return."

Full of the ideas of his expected happiness, the African magician not only ran, but absolutely flew to fetch the wine, and was back almost instantly. The princess did not doubt but that he would make haste, and therefore threw the powder which Aladdin had given her, into a goblet, and set it aside against she should call for it. They then sat down opposite to each other, so that the magician's back was towards the sideboard. The princess, helping him to what appeared the best, said to him, "If you have any inclination, I will give you some music, but as we are only by ourselves, I think that conversation will afford us more pleasure." The magician regarded this choice as a fresh mark of her favour.

After they had eaten for some little time, the princess asked for some wine, and drank to the magician's health. "You are right," she cried, when she had drunk, "in praising your wine; I have never tasted any so delicious." "Charming princess," replied he, holding the goblet they had given him in his hand, "my wine acquires a fresh flavour by the approbation you have bestowed upon it." "Drink to my health," resumed the princess; "you must confess I understand it." He did as she ordered him, and in returning the goblet, he added, "I esteem myself very happy, princess, to have reserved this wine for so good an occasion; and I confess I have never in my whole life drunk any in so agreeable a manner."

When they had continued eating some time longer and had taken three cups each, the princess, who had completely fascinated the African magician by her kind and obliging manners, at length gave the signal to her woman to have some wine, at the same time desiring her to bring her a goblet full, and also to fill that of the magician, which she presented to him. When they each held their goblet in their hands, "I know not," said she to the African magician, "what is your custom when those who are fond of each other drink together as we do. With us in China each person presents his own goblet to the other, and the lovers then drink to each other's health;" at the same time she presented the goblet she held, and put out her other hand to receive his. The African magician hastened to make this change, with which he was the more delighted, as he looked upon this favour as the surest mark of having made an entire conquest of the heart of the princess, and this completed his happiness. "Princess," he exclaimed before he drank, and holding the goblet in his hand, "we Africans ought to become as much refined in the art of giving a *vest* to love by every delightful accompaniment as the Chinese; by instructing me therefore in a lesson of which I am ignorant, I shall learn how sensible I ought to be of the favour I receive. Never shall I forget, most amiable princess, that in drinking out of your goblet I have regained that life which your cruelty, had it continued, would most infallibly have destroyed."

The princess Badroulboudour was almost worn out with his ridiculous and tiresome conversation. "Drink," she cried, interrupting him, "you may then say what you please to me." At the same time she appeared to carry the goblet she held to her mouth, but barely suffered it to touch her lips, while the African magician did not leave a single drop. In hastening to finish the cup

he held his head quite back, and remained so long in that situation that the princess, who kept the goblet to her lips, observed that his eyes were turned up, and he in fact fell upon his back without the least struggle.

The princess had no occasion to order them to go and open the secret door to admit Aladdin. Her women, who were stationed at different parts, gave the word one to the other from the saloon to the bottom of the staircase, so that the African magician had no sooner fallen backwards than the door was opened.

Aladdin went up to the saloon, and as soon as he saw the African magician extended on the sofa, he stopped Badroulboudour, who had risen to congratulate him on the joyful event. "My princess," he cried, "there is at this moment no time for rejoicing; do me the favour to retire to your apartment, and to suffer me to be alone, while I prepare for our return to China as quickly as you went from it." In fact, the princess, her women, and the eunuchs, were no sooner out of the hall than Aladdin shut the door; and then going up to the body of the African magician, which was lying lifeless on the sofa, he opened his vest and took out the lamp, which was wrapped up exactly in the manner the princess had described. He took it out and rubbed it. The Genius instantly presented himself and made the usual speech. "Genius," said Aladdin, "I have called you, to command you in the name of this lamp, your good mistress, immediately to take this palace and transport it to the same spot in China whence it was brought here." The Genius, first showing by an inclination of his head that he would obey, vanished. The journey was in fact made, and only two slight shocks were perceptible; one when the palace was taken up from the place where it stood in Africa, and the other when it was set down in China, opposite to the sultan's palace; and this was all done in a very short space of time.

Aladdin then went down to the apartment of Badroulboudour. "Our joy, my princess," exclaimed Aladdin, embracing her, "will be complete by tomorrow morning." As the princess had not finished her supper, and as Aladdin was much in want of food, she ordered them to bring the things from the saloon with twenty-four windows, where the supper had been served, and which had not yet been removed. The princess and Aladdin drank together, and found the old wine of the magician most excellent. They then, without saying a word of the pleasure of this meeting, which could not but be delightful, retired to their apartment.

Since the removal of Aladdin's palace and the loss of the princess Badroulboudour his daughter, as he thought for ever, the sultan had been inconsolable. He slept neither night nor day; and instead of avoiding everything that could increase his affliction, he, on the contrary, cherished every thought that was likely to add to it. Thus, instead of going only every morning to the cabinet to satisfy himself, as it were, with the recollected sight of what he was in fact unable to perceive, he went several times during the day to renew his tears, and overwhelm himself in the most painful sensations, from the thoughts of never again seeing what had afforded him so much delight, and from the loss of what he esteemed the most of anything in this world. The sun had not yet risen when the sultan entered this cabinet, as usual, on the very morning that Aladdin's palace had been brought back to its place. When he first came in he was so much absorbed in his own feelings, and so penetrated with sorrow, that he threw his eyes over the accustomed spot in the most melancholy manner, with the expectation of beholding as he thought only a vacant space. But when he first found this void filled up, he conjectured that it was only a mist. He then looked with greater attention, and could not at last doubt but it was the palace of Aladdin which he saw. Chagrin and sorrow were succeeded by the

most delightful sensations of joy. He hastened back to his apartment, and instantly ordered them to saddle and bring him a horse. It was no sooner brought than he mounted it and set out, thinking he could not arrive soon enough at Aladdin's palace.

Aladdin, who conjectured what might be the consequence, had risen at day-break; and as soon as he had dressed himself in one of his most magnificent robes, he went up to the saloon with twenty-four windows, from which he perceived the sultan as he was coming along. He then descended, and was exactly in time to receive him at the bottom of the grand staircase, and assist him in dismounting. "Aladdin," cried the sultan, "I cannot speak to you till I have seen and embraced my daughter."

He then conducted the sultan to the apartment of the princess Badroulboudour, whom Aladdin had informed, when he got up, that she was no longer in Africa but in China, at the capital of the sultan her father, and close to his palace. She had just finished dressing. The sultan eagerly embraced her, bathing her face with his tears, while the princess, on her part, showed the greatest marks of delight at again beholding him. For some time the sultan could not utter a syllable, so much was he affected at finding his daughter, after having lamented her loss as inevitable, while the princess shed tears of joy at the sight of him. "My dear daughter," exclaimed the sultan, at length recovering his speech, "I wish to believe that the joy you feel at again seeing me, makes you appear so little changed as if not even an unpleasant circumstance had happened to you. I am sure, however, that you must have suffered a great deal. No one can have been suddenly transported as you have been, and with a whole palace at the same time, without the greatest alarm and the most dreadful feelings. Relate to me, I beg of you, everything as it happened, and do not conceal the least circumstance."

The princess felt a pleasure in giving the sultan all the satisfaction he wished. "Sire," said she, "if I appear so little altered, I beg your majesty to consider that my expectations were raised so long ago as yesterday morning by the presence of my dear husband and liberator Aladdin, whom I had till then regarded and lamented as for ever lost to me, and that the happiness I experienced in again embracing him restored me nearly to my former self. Strictly speaking, my whole sorrow arose from finding myself torn from your majesty and my husband, not only out of my affection for him, but from the anxiety I suffered for fear of the dreadful effects of your majesty's rage, to which I did not doubt that he would be exposed, however innocent he might be; and no one could be more so. I have suffered less from the insolence of my ravisher, who has continually held a conversation that gave me pain, but to which I as often put an end by the ascendancy I knew how to maintain over him. I was not also under more restraint than I am at present. Aladdin himself had not the least concern in my removal; I was alone the cause, although the innocent one."

In order to convince the sultan that she spoke the truth, she gave him a detailed account how the African magician disguised himself like a seller of lamps, and offered to change new ones for old, and of the joke she amused herself with in changing Aladdin's lamp, the important and secret qualities of which she was ignorant of; of the instant removal of the palace and herself, in consequence of this exchange, and their being transported into Africa with the magician himself, whom two of her women, and also the eunuch who had made the exchange, recollected, when he had the audacity to come and present himself before her, the first time after the success of his daring enterprise, and of the proposal he made to marry her. She then informed him of the persecution she continued to suffer until the arrival of Aladdin; of the measures they

mutually took to get the lamp, which the magician constantly carried about him, in what manner they had succeeded, particularly by her having the courage to dissemble her feelings, and invite him to sup with her; with everything that passed till she presented the goblet to him, in which she had privately put the powder Aladdin had given her. "With respect to the rest," added she, "I leave Aladdin to inform you."

The latter had but little to add to this account. "When they opened the private door," he said, "I immediately went up to the saloon with twenty-four windows, and saw the traitor lying dead on the sofa from the strength of the powder. As it was not proper for the princess to remain there any longer, I requested her to go to her apartment with her women and eunuchs. When I was alone, after taking the lamp out of the magician's bosom, I made use of the same secret he had done to remove the palace and steal away the princess. I have brought the palace back to its place, and have had the happiness of restoring the princess to your majesty, as you commanded me. I have not deceived your majesty in this account; and if you will take the trouble to go up to the saloon, you will see the magician punished as he deserved."

In order to be more fully convinced, the sultan rose and went up; and when he had seen the dead body of the magician, whose face was already become livid from the strength of the poison, he embraced Aladdin with the greatest tenderness. "Do not think ill of me, my son," cried he, "for having used you in the manner I have done; paternal affection forced me to it, and I deserve to be pardoned for the excess to which it carried me." "Sire," replied Aladdin, "I have not the least reason to complain of your majesty's conduct: you have done only what was your duty. This magician, this infamous wretch, the most detestable of men, was the sole cause of my disgrace. When your majesty shall have leisure, I will give you an account of another piece of treachery, which he was guilty of towards me, not less infamous than this, from which the peculiar providence of God has preserved me." "I will take care to find an opportunity," said the sultan, "and that very soon; but let us now only think of making ourselves happy."

Aladdin ordered the magician's body to be thrown away, that it might serve for beasts and birds to prey upon. In the mean time the sultan, after having commanded the drums, trumpets, tymbals, and other instruments to announce a public rejoicing, had a festival proclaimed of ten days' continuance, in honour of the return of the princess Badroulboudour, of Aladdin and his palace.

It was in this manner that Aladdin a second time escaped an almost inevitable death; but even this was not the last; he was in danger a third time, the circumstances attending which are now going to be related.

The African magician had a younger brother who was not inferior to him in his knowledge of magic; and it may be said that he surpassed him in wicked intentions and diabolical machinations. As they did not always live together, nor even in the same city, one sometimes being at the eastern extremity, while the other travelled in the most western part of the world, they did not fail once every year to inform themselves, by means of their knowledge of geomancy, in what part of the world the other was, how he was going on, and whether either wanted the assistance of the other.

Some time after the African magician had failed in his attempt against Aladdin, his younger brother, who had not received any intelligence of him for a year, and who was not in Africa, wished to know where he was, whether he was well, and what he was about. Into whatever place he travelled he never went without his square geomantic box, as well as his brother. He took then this box, and having arranged the sand, he cast the points, drew the figures, and formed his horoscope. In examining each part he discovered that

his brother was no longer alive, that he had been poisoned, and that his death was sudden. On searching further he found that this took place in a capital situated in a particular part of China; and that he by whom he had been poisoned, was a man of low birth, but was married to a princess, the daughter of the sultan.

When the magician was apprised of the melancholy state of his brother, he did not waste his time in useless regrets, which could not again restore him to life, but he took the instant resolution to revenge his death; he mounted his horse, and directly began his journey towards China. He traversed plains, rivers, mountains, and deserts, and after a long journey, accompanied by almost incredible fatigue and difficulty, he at length reached China; and in a short time afterwards arrived at that capital, which his experiment in geomancy had pointed out. Certain of not being deceived, nor of having mistaken one kingdom for another, he arrived in this capital, and took up his abode there.

The very next morning the magician walked out, not so much for the purpose of seeing the beauties of the place, which did not at all affect him, as with the intention of commencing his measures in order to put his pernicious design into execution. He introduced himself into the most frequented places, and was very attentive to the conversation that passed. At a place where many people spent their time in playing a variety of games, and where, while some are playing, others entertain themselves with the news of the day, or with talking over their own private affairs, he observed that they spoke much of, and highly praised the virtues and piety of a woman called Fatima, who led a retired life, and even of the miracles she performed. As he thought that this woman might perhaps be in some way useful in the business he was about, he took one of the persons aside, and begged him to give him a more particular account of this holy woman, and what sort of miracles she performed.

"What," exclaimed this man, "have you never seen or even heard of her? She is the admiration of the whole city, by her fasting and austere life, and by the good example she sets. Except on Mondays and Fridays she never leaves her hermitage; but on these days she comes into the city, and she does an infinite deal of good, for there is no one who is afflicted with a pain in the head, whom she does not cure by laying her hands upon them."

The magician did not want to know more on this subject; he only inquired of the same person in what quarter of the city the hermitage of this holy woman was. He informed him; upon which, after first forming the horrible design about to be mentioned, and that he might be the more sure of its success, he observed all her conduct on the very first day she went out after this inquiry, and did not lose sight of her the whole day, till she returned in the evening to her cell. When she had accurately remarked the spot, he returned to one of those places where, as had been said, a certain warm liquor is prepared and sold, and where, if you choose it, you may pass the night, particularly during the hot weather, when the inhabitants of China prefer sleeping upon a mat rather than a bed.

The magician, having first paid the owner for what he had, which did not amount to much, went out about midnight, and took the road to the hermitage of Fatima, the holy woman, the name by which she was distinguished throughout the city. He had no difficulty in opening the door, as it was only fastened by a latch. As soon as he had entered, he shut it again, without making any noise. He perceived Fatima, by the light of the moon, lying almost in the open air, upon a couch, with a ragged mat, close to the side of her cell. He approached, and after taking out a poniard he had by his side, he awoke her.

On opening her eyes, poor Fatima was very much astonished at seeing a man on the point of plunging a poniard into her. Holding the point of the dagger

against her breast, ready in an instant to plunge it into her heart, "If you cry out," said he, "or make the least noise, I will murder you. Get up and do what I bid you." Fatima, who always slept in her clothes, got up, trembling with fear. "Fear nothing," said the magician, "I only want your habit; give it me, and take mine." When this was done, and the magician was dressed in Fatima's clothes, he said to her, "Paint my face like yours, so that I shall resemble you, and the colour will not come off." As he saw that she still trembled, he added, in order to give her courage, and that she might do what he wanted of her the better, "Fear nothing, I tell you again; I swear, in the name of God, that I will spare your life." Fatima then carried him into the interior of her cell, lighted her lamp, and taking a certain liquid in a basin, and a pencil, she rubbed it over his face, assured him it would not change, and that there was no difference in colour between hers and his. She then put upon him her own head-dress, with a veil, and she instructed him how she concealed her face with it, in walking through the city. She finished by hanging a large necklace, or chaplet, round his neck, which came down nearly to his waist; she then put the stick she was accustomed to walk with, into his hand, and giving him a mirror, "Look," she said, "and you will find that you cannot possibly resemble me more." The magician found everything as he wished; but he did not keep the oath he had so solemnly taken in her presence. But that no one might see the blood, which would fall if he stabbed her with his poniard, he strangled her; and when he found that she was dead, he drew the body by the feet to the cistern of the hermitage, and threw it in.

The magician, thus disguised like the holy woman, passed the remainder of the night in the hermitage, after having defiled it by so detestable a murder. Very early the next morning, although it was not the usual day for Fatima's appearance in the city, he did not hesitate to go out, because he was very well aware that no one would ask him about it, or if they did, he might easily answer the question. As the first thing he did on his arrival in the city, had been to go and observe the palace of Aladdin, and as it was there that he meant to put his scheme in execution, he took the road towards it.

As soon as the people saw the holy woman, as every one imagined him to be, the magician was surrounded by a great crowd of people. Some recommended themselves to his prayers, others kissed his hand; others still more respectful kissed the hem of his robe, while others, either because they had the headache; or wished to be preserved from it, bent down before him, that he might lay his hand upon them; he did so, muttering at the same time a few words, like a sort of prayer. In short, he so well imitated the holy woman, that every one was deceived, and took him for her. After stopping very often, to satisfy those sort of people, who, in fact, receive neither good nor harm from this imposition of hands, he at last arrived in the square before Aladdin's palace, where, as the crowd increased, the difficulty and press to get near him was also greater. The strongest and most zealous beat off the crowd to get a place for themselves, and hence several quarrels arose, the noise of which reached the ears of the princess Badroulboudour, who was sitting in the saloon with twenty-four windows.

The princess demanded what the occasion of the noise was, and as no person could inform her, she ordered some one to go and see, and bring her an account. One of her women, without leaving the saloon, looked through the lattice, and then came and told her that it arose from a crowd of people, who were collected round the holy woman, to be cured of a pain in their heads, by her laying her hands upon them.

The princess, who for some time past had heard every one speak in praise of this holy woman, but who had never yet beheld her, felt a desire to see and

converse with her. Having mentioned something to this effect, the chief of the eunuchs, who was present, said, that if she wished it, he was sure he could get her to come, and that she had only to give her orders. The princess consented to it, and he instantly despatched four eunuchs, with an order to bring back this pretended old woman with them.

As soon as the eunuchs were gone out of the gate of Aladdin's palace, and they were observed to make towards the place where the holy woman was, or rather the magician disguised as such, the crowd began to disperse; and when he was thus more at liberty, and saw that they were coming towards him, he went part of the way to meet them, and with the greater glee, as he thus saw that his cunning scheme was in a prosperous state. One of the eunuchs addressed him in these words: "Holy woman, the princess wishes to see you; follow us." "The princess honours me very much," replied the pretended Fatima. "I am ready to obey her commands;" and he then followed the eunuchs, who immediately went back to the palace.

When the magician, clothed in this sanctified dress, but with a heart the most diabolical, was introduced into the saloon with twenty-four windows, and perceived the princess, he began a prayer, which contained a long catalogue of exhortation and wishes for her piety, her prosperity, and the accomplishment of everything she could desire. He then displayed all his hypocritical and deceitful rhetoric, in order to insinuate himself, under the cloak of great piety, into the good opinion of the princess. And in this it was so much the easier for him to succeed, as the princess, who was naturally of the best disposition, was persuaded that all the world were at least as good as herself; particularly all those who professed to serve God in a retired life.

When the false Fatima had finished her long harangue, "My good mother," replied the incense "I am much obliged to you for your kind prayers; I have the greatest confidence in them, and trust God will hear them. Approach and sit down near me." The pretended Fatima sat down with the greatest appearance of modesty; when the princess, continuing her speech, said, "My good mother, I have a request to make to you, which you must not refuse me, and that is, that you come and live with me, that I may have you constantly to converse with, and may learn from your advice, and the good example you set me, how I ought to love God."

"Princess," replied the false Fatima, "I entreat you not to require my compliance in a thing to which I cannot agree without breaking in upon my prayers and devotions." "Do not let that give you any pain," resumed the princess; "I have many apartments which are not occupied, and you shall choose that which you like best; and you shall have the power of attending to your devotions with as much liberty there, as if you were in your own hermitage."

The magician, who had no other view but to introduce himself into Aladdin's palace, where it would be much easier for him to execute the wicked design he meditated, by thus remaining under the auspices and protection of the princess, than if he were obliged to go backwards and forwards from the palace to the hermitage, did not make much difficulty in acceding to the obliging offer of Badroulboudour. "Princess," he replied, "whatever resolution a poor and miserable woman like myself may have made, to renounce the world, its pomps and vanities, I nevertheless dare not resist either the wish or the command of so pious and charitable a princess."

Upon this answer, the princess herself got up, and said to the magician: "Rise, and come with me, that I may show you all the apartments that are unoccupied; you may then make your choice." He followed the princess through all the apartments she showed him, which were very good, and

handsomely furnished. He chose the one which appeared to be the least so, saying at the same time, that it was much too good for him, and that he only made choice of it to oblige her.

The princess wished to take this impostor back with her to the saloon with twenty-four windows, and dine with her; but as it was necessary in the act of eating to uncover his face, which he had hitherto kept concealed by the veil; and as he was afraid she might not then suppose him to be Fatima, the holy woman, he begged her so earnestly to excuse him, saying that he never eat anything but bread and dried fruits, and to permit him to take his trifling meal in his own apartment, that she readily complied with his wishes. "My good mother," she said, "you are quite at liberty; do as you would in the hermitage; I will order them to carry you in some food; but remember, that I shall expect you as soon as you have finished your repast."

The princess then dined, and the false Fatima did not fail to return to her as soon as she was informed by a eunuch, whom she ordered to acquaint her when she arose from table. "My good mother," said the princess, "I am delighted at enjoying the society of such a holy woman as you are; you will, by your presence, bring down blessings upon the whole palace. And now I mention this palace, pray tell me how you like it." But before I show you every particular part, tell me how you like this saloon."

At this inquiry the pretended Fatima, who, in order to act her part with more appearance of truth, had till now kept her head cast down towards the ground, without ever turning it to look on either side, at length raised it, and looked at everything in the saloon, from one end to the other; and when she had thoroughly examined it, she said, "Indeed, princess, the saloon is truly beautiful, and worthy of admiration. But as far as a recluse can judge, who knows nothing of what is reckoned beautiful by the world in general, I think one thing is wanting." "What is that, my good mother?" inquired Badroulboudour; "I entreat you to tell it me. For my part, I thought, and had also heard it said, that nothing was wanting; but whatever may be deficient, I will have supplied."

"Pardon me this liberty, princess," replied the still dissembling magician; "my opinion, if it can be of any value, is, that if the egg of a roc were suspended from the centre of the dome, this saloon would not have its equal in either of the four quarters of the globe; and your palace would be the wonder of the whole universe."

"My good mother," resumed the princess, "what kind of a bird is a roc, and where could the egg of one be found?" "Princess," answered the feigned Fatima, "the roc is a bird of prodigious size, which inhabits the summit of Mount Caucasus; and the architect who designed your palace, can procure you one."

After having thanked the pretended Fatima for her kind information and good advice, at least, as she thought it, the princess Badroulboudour continued the conversation upon various other subjects; but she by no means forgot the egg of the roc, and of which she fully intended to inform Aladdin, when he returned from hunting. He had already been absent six days; and the magician, who was well aware of this circumstance, wished to take every advantage of his absence. Aladdin returned on the same evening, at a time when the false Fatima had taken leave of the princess, and had retired to the apartment allotted to her. As soon as he entered the palace, he went to the apartment of the princess, to which she had already retired. He saluted and embraced her; but she seemed to him to receive him with rather less affection than usual. "I do not find you, my princess," said he, "in your usual good spirits. Has anything happened during my absence, that has dis-

pleased or vexed you? Do not, in the name of God, conceal it from me; for there is nothing in my power that I will not do to endeavour to dispel it." "It is a mere trifle," replied the princess; "and it really gives me so little anxiety, that I did not suppose it would be so apparent in my face and manner, that you could have perceived it. But since you have observed some alteration in me, which I by no means intended, I will not conceal the cause, inconsiderable as it is.

"I thought as well as you did," the princess went on, "that our palace was the most superb, the most beautiful, and the most ornamented of any in the whole world. I will tell you, however, what has come into my head, after having thoroughly examined the saloon with twenty-four windows. Do not you think with me, that if the egg of a roc was suspended from the centre of the dome, that we should have nothing to wish for?" "It is enough, princess," replied Aladdin, "that you think the want of a roc's egg is a defect. You shall find by the diligence with which I am going to repair it, that there is nothing I will not do through my love for you."

Aladdin instantly left the princess, and went up to the saloon with twenty-four windows; and then taking the lamp, which he now always carried about with him, since the danger he had experienced from the neglect of that precaution, out of his bosom, he rubbed it. The Genius immediately appeared before him. "Genius," said Aladdin, "there wants to be the egg of a roc suspended from the centre of this dome, in order to make it perfect; I command you, in the name of the lamp, which I hold, to get this defect rectified."

Aladdin had scarcely pronounced these words, before the Genius uttered so loud and dreadful a scream, that the very roc in shock, and Aladdin trembled so violently he was ready to fall. "What! wretch," exclaimed the Genius, in a voice that would have made the most courageous man tremble, "is it not enough, that I and my companions have done everything thou hast chosen to command, but that thou repayest our services by an ingratitude that is unequalled, and commandest me to bring thee my master, and hang him up in the midst of this vaulted dome? Thou art deserving, for this crime, of being instantly torn to atoms, with thy wife and palace with thee. But thou art fortunate that the request did not originate with thee, and that the command is not in any way thine. Learn who is the true author. It is no other than the brother of thy enemy, the African magician, whom thou hast destroyed as he deserved. He is in thy palace, disguised under the appearance of Fatima, the holy woman, whom he has murdered; and it is he who has suggested the idea to thy wife, to make the horrible and destructive request thou hast done. His design is to kill thee; therefore, take care of thyself." As the Genius said this, he vanished.

Aladdin lost not a syllable of the last words the Genius spoke. He had before heard of the holy woman Fatima, and was not ignorant of the manner in which she could cure a pain in the head, at least, as they pretended. He then returned to the apartment of the princess, but did not mention what had happened to him. He sat down, and complained of a violent pain that had suddenly seized his head, and at the same time he held his hand up to his forehead. The princess directly ordered them to call the holy woman, and while they were gone, she related to Aladdin the manner in which she had induced her to come to the palace, where she had given her an apartment.

The pretended Fatima came; and as soon as she entered, Aladdin said to her, "I am very happy, my good mother to see you, and it is for my advantage to have you here just now. I am tormented with a violent headache, which has not long attacked me. I request your assistance; and from the reliance I place on your good prayers, I hope you will not refuse me that favour which you grant to all who are thus afflicted." When he had said this, he bent his

head forward, and the false Fatima also advanced, putting at the same time her hand upon a poniard which was concealed in her girdle under her robe. Aladdin, who watched what she did, seized her hand before she could draw it, and piercing her to the heart with her own weapon, he threw her dead upon the floor.

"What have you done, my dear husband!" exclaimed the princess, in the greatest surprise; "you have killed the holy woman." "No, no, my princess," answered Aladdin, without the least emotion, "I have not killed Fatima, but a villain who was going to assassinate me if I had not prevented him. It is this wretch whom you behold," added he, showing his face, "who has strangled Fatima, whom you thought I had destroyed, and therefore regretted; and who has disguised himself in her clothes in order to murder me. And to convince you still further, I must inform you that he is the brother of the African magician who carried you off." Aladdin then related to her in what manner he had learnt these particulars, and he then ordered the body to be removed.

It was in this manner that Aladdin was delivered from the persecution of the two magicians. A few years after, the sultan being now very old, died. As he left no male issue, the princess Badroulboudour, as his legitimate heir, succeeded to the throne, and, of course, transferred the supreme power to Aladdin. They reigned together many years, and he left an illustrious and numerous posterity.

"Sire," said the sultana Scheherazade, as soon as she had finished the account of the adventures arising from the wonderful lamp, "your majesty has without doubt remarked in the character of the African magician, that of a man given up to the inordinate passion of acquiring wealth by the most unjustifiable methods, and although by these methods he discovered the greatest profusion, he was not suffered to enjoy it, because he was unworthy. In Aladdin, on the contrary, you see a man who, from the lowest origin, rose to a throne, by making use of the same treasures which readily presented themselves, only because he searched for them in proportion as they were necessary for him to attain the end he wished. In the sultan you must have observed that even a good, just, and equitable monarch runs the chance of being dethroned, when by an act of injustice, and contrary to every rule of equity, he dared with an unreasonable celerity to condemn an innocent man without wishing to hear his defence. Your majesty, too, must feel a horror at the crimes of the two infamous magicians, one of whom sacrificed his life for the sake of possessing treasures, and the other both his life and his religion, for the sake of avenging a villain equal to himself, and like him, received the reward due to his crimes."

The sultan of the Indies gave evident proofs to Scheherazade that he was very much pleased with the prodigies that originated from the wonderful lamp, and that the other stories she had each morning told him afforded him great pleasure. In fact, they were always diverting, and attended also with a good moral. It was very evident that the sultana made them succeed each other so skilfully, that he was not sorry to be able by these means to hold in suspense the execution of the oath he had so solemnly taken, to have a female but for one night, and the next morning to order her death. He now only thought whether he could not in the end absolutely exhaust the sultana's store.

With this intention, after hearing the conclusion of the history of Aladdin and the princess Badroulboudour, which was very different from any he had yet heard, he even got the start of Dinarzade, and himself waked the sultana, by asking if she had got to the end of her tales.

"To the end of my tales, sire!" replied Scheherazade, smiling at this question, "I am an immense distance from that: the number of them is so great,

that it would be almost impossible to give your majesty a list of them. But what I fear, sire, is, that your majesty will at last grow tired, and not wish to hear me much sooner than I shall want materials to go on with." "Do not be afraid of that," replied Schahriar, "but let me hear what you have next to relate."

The sultana, encouraged by this speech, began immediately a new story in these terms. "I have often, sire," said she, "entertained your majesty with some adventures of the famous caliph Haroun Alraschid; but there are also a great many others besides those, and I will now relate one that is not less worthy of your curiosity.

THE ADVENTURES OF THE CALIPH HAROUN ALRASCHID.

SOMETIMES, as your majesty well knows, and may yourself have experienced, we are in such extraordinary transports of joy that we immediately communicate this passion to those around us, and at others, as readily partake of their mirth. Sometimes, also, we are so deeply affected with melancholy, that we become insupportable to ourselves; and so far from being able to assign the cause of it if we are asked, we cannot even satisfy our own inquiries.

The caliph was one day in this state of mind, when Giafar, his faithful and beloved grand vizier, came into his presence. This minister found him alone, a thing which seldom happened to him; and as he perceived upon advancing that he was in a gloomy mood, and that he did not so much as lift up his eyes to look at him, he stopped till he should deign to cast them upon him. At length the caliph looked up and saw the vizier, but as quickly turned away, and remained in the same fixed posture as before.

As the grand vizier saw nothing in the caliph's countenance which indicated any displeasure towards himself, he thus addressed him: "Commander of the Faithful, will your majesty permit me to ask the cause of that dejection you discover, and with which it appears to me you are in general so little affected?" "It is true, vizier," answered the caliph, changing his posture, "I am seldom disposed to be affected in this manner, and but for you, I should not have been sensible of the disposition in which you find me, and in which I have no longer any desire to remain. If nothing new has happened to occasion your coming to me, you will give me pleasure in finding something that will tend to dissipate it." "Commander of the Faithful," replied the grand vizier, "my duty alone has led me hither, and I take the liberty of bringing to your majesty's recollection the obligation you have laid yourself under of witnessing in person that excellent system of police, which you are desirous should be observed in your capital and its neighbourhood. This is the day your majesty has fixed for troubling yourself with this business, and no circumstance better than that which now presents itself can dispel the cloud which overcasts your accustomed cheerfulness." "I had forgotten it," replied the caliph, "and you do well to remind me. Go, then, and change your dress, and I will do the same."

Each of them assumed the habit of a foreign merchant; and in this disguise they went unattended through a private door of the palace-garden, which opened into the country. They took a turn on the outside of the town, quite to the banks of the river, at some distance from the gate, without noticing any irregularity. They passed the river in the first boat they found, and when they had completed the circuit of the other part of the town opposite to that which they had first visited, they turned by way of the bridge which forms the communication.

They passed this bridge, at the foot of which they met with an old blind man, who was begging. The caliph turned round and dropped a piece of gold into his hand. The blind man instantly laid hold of his hand and stopped him. "Charitable person!" said he, "whoever you are, whom God has inspired to give me alms, do not, I beseech you, refuse me a further favour, but give me a blow on the head. I deserve this, and even a still greater punishment." Upon saying this, he quitted the caliph's hand, that he might have the power of giving him the blow, but seized his garment, for fear he should pass on without doing so.

The caliph, surprised at the request and behaviour of the blind man, answered, "My good fellow, I cannot comply with your request; I shall certainly take care not to destroy the value of my gift by the ill-treatment you require at my hands." And saying this he endeavoured to escape from him.

The blind man, who was apprehensive of the unwillingness of his benefactor, from the frequent experience he had on similar occasions, made a still stronger effort to hold him fast. "Sir," said he, "pardon my boldness and my importunity; give me, I entreat you, the blow, or take back your alms. I can accept it upon no other condition, without breaking a solemn oath, which I have taken before God; and if you were acquainted with the reason for it, you would at once agree with me, that the punishment is very inconsiderable."

The caliph, who was unwilling to be any longer detained, yielded to the blind man's importunity, and gave him a slight blow. The blind man immediately quitted his hold with thanks and blessings. The caliph went on with the grand vizier; but after a few steps he said to him: "Surely the reason which has induced this blind man to behave thus to all those who bestow their alms upon him, must be of some importance. I should like to be acquainted with it: return therefore, and tell him who I am, and order him to come to-morrow without fail to the palace, at the time of afternoon prayers, for I wish to speak with him." The grand vizier went back directly, gave something to the blind man, and after he had also given him the required blow, told him the order; he then came back and joined the caliph.

They re-entered the town; and passing through a square, they found there a great number of people looking at a young well-dressed man, mounted on a mare, which he pushed at full speed round the square, whipping it and spurring it most unmercifully, so that it was covered with foam and blood. The caliph, astonished at the cruelty of this young man, stopped to ask if the reason was known why he treated the animal so ill, and found that nobody knew, but that for some time he was every day at the same hour engaged in this inhuman exercise.

They continued their walk, and the caliph told the vizier to notice this square, and not to fail to cause this young man to come to him to-morrow, at the same hour which was fixed for the blind man.

Before the caliph reached the palace, in a street through which he had not passed for a long time, he observed a new built house, which seemed to be the residence of some great man of the court. He asked the grand vizier if he could tell to whom it belonged; the latter replied that he did not know, but would go and make inquiry. He then asked a neighbour, who told him that this house belonged to Cogia Hassan, surnamed Alhabbal, from his trade of rope-making, which he had himself seen him carry on in a state of great poverty, and that, without knowing in what way he had been so favoured by fortune, he had acquired so much wealth, as to support in a very honourable and splendid manner the expense of the building.

The grand vizier rejoined the caliph, and told him what he had learned. "I would see this Cogia Hassan Alhabbal," said the caliph to him. "Go, and

bid him come also to the palace at the same hour with the other two." The grand vizier did not fail to execute the caliph's orders.

The next day, when afternoon prayers were ended, the caliph returned to his apartment, and the grand vizier immediately brought in the three persons above mentioned, and presented them to him. They all three prostrated themselves before the throne of the caliph; and when they were raised, the caliph asked the blind man his name. He answered, "I am called Baba Abdalla." "Baba Abdalla," resumed the caliph, "your manner of asking alms appeared yesterday so extraordinary, that if I had not been influenced by certain considerations, I should have been very far from humouring you as I did, and I would instantly put a stop to your insulting the public in that manner. I have ordered you here to know from yourself what motive can have urged you to take so silly an oath as you have; and from what you shall say, I shall judge whether you have done right, and whether I ought to suffer you to continue a practice which seems likely to be followed by many ill consequences. Tell me then, without disguise, whence this extravagant conceit arises; conceal nothing from me, for I must know the whole."

Baba Abdalla, intimidated by this reproof, prostrated himself a second time before the throne of the caliph; and after rising, "Commander of the Faithful," said he immediately, "I most humbly beg pardon of your majesty for the boldness with which I have dared to demand of you, and oblige you to do a thing which in truth seems very absurd. I confess my crime; but as I did not then know your majesty, I implore your clemency, and hope you will consider my ignorance."

"As to your majesty's being pleased to look upon what I did as folly, I confess it to be so, and my behaviour must appear such in the eyes of men; but in the sight of God it is but a slight penance for an enormous crime, of which I have been guilty, and which I should not expiate, though every man in the world should thus in succession give me a blow; of this your majesty will yourself be a judge, when by the recital of the history, which I am entering upon in obedience to your commands, I shall have acquainted you with the nature of my heinous crime."

THE HISTORY OF BABA ABDALLA, THE BLIND MAN.

I WAS born at Bagdad, and possessed some inheritance from my father and mother, who both died within a few days of each other. Although I was but little advanced in life, I did not, as young men usually do, waste my fortune in a short time by idle and vicious expenses. On the contrary, I was always attentive to increase it by my industry, with all the care and trouble I could bestow. At length I became rich enough to possess of my own, fourscore camels, which I let to the caravan merchants, and which produced me large sums every journey I made in different parts of your majesty's extended empire, whither I accompanied them.

Thus successful, and with an earnest desire to become still richer, one day as I was returning from Balsora with my camels unladen, which I had conducted thither with goods to be embarked for India, and when I had turned them off to feed on a spot far distant from any habitation, and where abundant pasture had induced me to halt, a dervise, who was going on foot to Balsora, came up and sat down near me to refresh himself after his fatigue. I asked him whence he came and whither he was going; he put the same questions to me, and after we had mutually satisfied each other's curiosity, we produced our provisions in common, and eat them together.

During our repast, after having conversed upon many indifferent things, the dervise told me that in a place not far off, he knew of a treasure of immense value, so large and rich, that if my fourscore camels should be all laden from thence with gold and jewels, it would seem as if nothing had been taken away.

This good intelligence at once surprised and delighted me. I was quite beside myself with the joy I felt. I did not think the dervise capable of imposing upon me. Instantly therefore embracing him, I cried, "My good dervise, I see plainly that you have little regard for the things of this world : of what account to you, therefore, is the knowledge of this treasure? You are alone, and of yourself could carry off but a very small part of it ; show me where it is, and I will load my fourscore camels out of it, and present you with one of them in return for the profit and the pleasure you will have procured for me."

My offer was trifling, no doubt, but it appeared to me considerable, so entirely had avarice gained possession of my heart from the time he had imparted to me this secret ; and I considered the threescore and nineteen loads which would be mine, as nothing in comparison of the one of which I should deprive myself, by giving it to him.

The dervise, who saw at once my excessive covetousness, taking no offence at all at the unreasonable offer I had just made him, said without the least emotion, "Brother, you see plainly that what you offer me is in no proportion to the favour you request. I need not have said a word to you of the treasure, and might have kept my secret, but what I have so frankly told you must assure you of the good design I had, and still have of obliging you, and of giving you cause to remember me for ever, by thus making your fortune and my own. I have now another proposal to make to you, more just and more equitable ; it is with you to consider whether you will accept it. You said," continued the dervise, "that you were in possession of fourscore camels : I am ready to conduct you to the place where the treasure lies ; we will together load them with as much of the gold and jewels as they can carry, but upon condition, that when they shall be all laden, you shall give up one-half of them with their burden, and you shall retain the other half for yourself ; after which we will separate and go where we please, you with your share, and I with mine. You see this division is perfectly equitable ; and if you present me with forty camels, you will by my means have enough to purchase a thousand such."

I could not deny that the proposal of the dervise was very fair ; nevertheless, without considering the great wealth which would accrue to me for acceding to it, I looked upon giving up the half of my camels as a great loss, and particularly when I thought the dervise would be as rich as myself, so that I already repaid with ingratitude a favour of the purest generosity, which I had not yet received from the dervise ; but there was no room for hesitation ; I must at once accept the terms or be satisfied all my life with repenting that, entirely by my own fault, I had lost an opportunity of making a large fortune.

I instantly collected my camels, and we proceeded together. After travelling some time, we arrived at a spacious valley, the entrance to which was very narrow. My camels could pass only one by one ; but as the space by degrees grew larger, they could easily afterwards go on together. The two mountains which formed this valley, made a sort of semicircle at its extremity, and were so high, so steep, and so impossible to be passed, that we had no reason to fear any mortal could see us.

When we had arrived within the pass of the mountains, "Let us go no

farther," said the dervise; "stop your camels, and make them lie down in the spot before you, that we may have no trouble in loading them, and when you have done so, I will go before you to the opening of the place where the treasure is deposited." I did as the dervise requested me, and went to him directly. I found him with a flint and steel in his hand, collecting a little dry wood for a fire. As soon as he had kindled one, he threw upon it some perfume, at the same time uttering some words which I could not understand, and immediately a thick smoke rose into the air. He divided this smoke, and in a moment, although the rock which was between the mountains, and rose perpendicularly to a considerable height, seemed not to have the least appearance of an opening, one was nevertheless made through the rock itself, like a passage with folding doors, admirably contrived of the same material.

This opening displayed to our view, in a vast cavern sunk into the rock, a magnificent palace, the work rather of Genii than of men; for men would never think of undertaking anything so bold and so astonishing. But it is now too late that I make this observation to your majesty, which at the time never occurred to me. I was not even struck with the infinite richness of what was to be seen on all sides, but without stopping to notice the disposition in which so much treasure had been so carefully arranged, as an eagle darts upon his prey, I ran to the first heap of gold I saw, and poured into a sack, with which I was prepared, as much money as I thought I could carry; the sacks were large, and I would fain have filled them all, but it was necessary to think of the strength of my camels. The dervise was equally employed; but I perceived that he confined himself to the jewels; he explained to me the reason of it; I then followed his example, and we carried off a much greater proportion of precious stones than of gold. After we had filled our sacks and loaded the camels, we had nothing to do but to close the treasure again and depart.

Before we left the treasure, the dervise went back again, and as there were many vases of gold in a variety of shapes and fashions, as well as of other precious materials, I observed that he took from one of them a small box of a certain wood, with which I was unacquainted, and which he put into his bosom, after he had shown me that it contained only a sort of ointment.

The dervise went through the same ceremony at closing up the treasure as he did on opening it; and after having uttered certain words, the door was shut upon the treasure, and the rock appeared with the same unbroken surface as before.

We then divided our camels, which we made get up with their burdens. I placed myself at the head of the forty, which I had reserved for myself, and the dervise at the head of the others, which I had given up to him.

We passed one by one through the same narrow path by which we entered the valley, and then travelled on together till we came to the great road, where we were to separate, he to pursue his journey to Balsora, and I to return to Bagdad. I thanked him for his great kindness in the strongest terms, such as best marked my gratitude for having preferred me to all others with whom to share so much wealth. We embraced one another with the highest satisfaction, and after having mutually hidden each other farewell, we parted.

I had taken but few steps to come up with my camels, who were accustomed to travel on in the road I directed them, before the demon of ingratitude and envy got possession of my heart; I lamented the loss of my forty camels, and still more, the wealth they carried. "The dervise has no occasion for all this wealth," said I to myself; "he is master of the whole treasure, and can help himself to as much as he chooses:" and thus I gave myself up to the blackest ingratitude, and instantly determined to take from him his camels and their burdens.

In order to accomplish my purpose, I began to make my camels halt ; I then ran after the dervise, calling to him as loud as I could, to make him understand that I had something more to say to him ; and I made signs to him to stop his camels also, and to wait for me. He heard my voice and stood still.

When I had come up to him, "Brother," said I, "no sooner had I quitted you, than I thought of a thing which I never adverted to before, and which, perhaps, you yourself have never yet considered. You are a good dervise, used to live in great tranquillity, free from all worldly care, and with no other engagement than that of serving God. You have no conception, perhaps, of the trouble you have undertaken, by charging yourself with the care of so many camels. Believe me, you had better take away only thirty, and I suppose you will have quite difficulty enough in managing them. You may leave the rest to me ; I am used to them." "I believe you are right," said the dervise, who found himself in no situation to dispute the matter with me. "And I confess," added he, "I never once thought of it. I was beginning to feel uneasy at what you now represent to me. Select the ten most agreeable to you, and, with God's blessing, take them away with you."

I chose ten of them, and after having turned them back, I put them in the road to follow mine. I did not think the dervise would have allowed himself to be so easily persuaded. This increased my avidity, and I flattered myself I should have but little trouble to obtain ten more.

In fact, instead of thanking him for the rich present he had just made me, "Brother," said I again, "from the concern I take in your quiet, I cannot determine to quit you without beseeching you to consider, once more, how difficult it is to conduct thirty laden camels, particularly for a man like you, unaccustomed to this sort of trouble. You would find it much better to repeat the favour you have just conferred upon me. What I say, you see, is not so much for my own sake and my own advantage, as for your satisfaction. Relieve yourself, therefore, and turn over these other ten camels to a person like me, to whom it would be no more trouble to take the care of a hundred than of a single one."

What I said had all the effect I wished, and the dervise gave up to me, without an objection, the ten camels I demanded ; so that there remained with him no more than twenty, while I was possessed of sixty, all laden, the value of which exceeded the wealth of many princes. After this, I think I ought to have been contented ; but, like a person in a dropsy, who the more he drinks the more thirsty he grows, I became still more earnest than before to obtain the last twenty, which the dervise yet possessed.

I redoubled my solicitations, my entreaties, and importunity to induce the dervise to give me up ten of those twenty. He readily consented ; and with regard to the remaining ten, I embraced him, and conjured him with all the address I was able, not to refuse me these, and thus to complete the eternal obligation I owed him ; and I was overjoyed at hearing him say he consented. "Make a proper use of them, brother," added he, "and remember, that God can take away riches from us, as he bestows them upon us, if we do not employ them in the service of the poor, whom he is pleased to leave in poverty, for the express purpose of giving the rich an opportunity, by their alms, of meriting a greater recompense in another world."

My blindness was so great, that I was in no condition to reap advantage from such good advice. I was not satisfied with finding myself in possession again of my fourscore camels, and to know that they were laden with a treasure so invaluable as ought to render me the happiest of men. It came into my mind, that the little box of ointment which the dervise had taken, and which he had

shown me, might be something more precious than all the wealth for which I had yet been obliged to him. "The place from which the dervise took it," said I to myself, "and the solicitude which he showed to gain possession of it, make me satisfied that there is contained in it something of a mysterious nature." This determined me to prepare for trying to obtain it. I had just embraced him and said farewell, when going up to him again, "I have now recollected," said I, "to ask you what you mean to do with that little box of ointment? It seems to me such a trifle that it is hardly worth the trouble of carrying it away: pray make me a present of it; besides, a dervise like you, who have renounced the vanities of the world, can have no occasion for ointment."

Would to God that he had refused me this box! But, if he had been so disposed, I was no longer master of myself: I was the strongest, and thoroughly resolved to take it from him by force; so that to complete my satisfaction, it could not be said that he had taken away the smallest part of the treasure, greatly as I had been indebted to him.

Far from refusing me the box, the dervise immediately took it from his bosom, and presenting it to me with the best humour in the world, "There, brother," said he, "take it, you are welcome to this also; if I can do more for you, you have only to ask and you shall be satisfied."

When I had the box in my hand I opened it, and looking at the ointment, "Since," said I, "you are so very friendly, and that you are never tired of obliging me, do, I beseech you, tell me the particular use of this ointment." "The use of it is surprising and marvellous," replied the dervise. "If you apply a little of this ointment round the left eye and upon the eyelid, all the treasures concealed within the bosom of the earth will appear to your view; but if you make the same application to the right eye, you will become blind."

I wished myself to experience an effect so wonderful. "Take the box," said I, as I offered it to him, "and do you apply this ointment to my left eye. You understand the matter better than I do; I am impatient to make trial of a thing which appears to me incredible."

The dervise very readily undertook the business; he made me shut my left eye, and applied the ointment. When he had done I opened my eye, and found he had told me the truth. In fact, I saw an infinite number of places, filled with riches so prodigious and in such variety, that it would be impossible for me to particularise them. But as I was obliged to keep my right eye shut with my hand, this fatigued me, and I begged the dervise to apply some ointment also round that eye. "I am ready to do so," said the dervise; "but you must remember that I told you, if you put any upon the right eye you would instantly become blind. Such is the power of this ointment, and you will choose accordingly."

Far from being satisfied that the dervise had told me the truth, I imagined, on the contrary, that there was some new mystery which he wished to conceal from me. "Brother," said I, smiling, "I well know you mean to impose upon me; it is unnatural to suppose that the same ointment should have two such opposite effects." "The case, however, is as I say," replied the dervise, calling God to witness, "and you may believe me, for I cannot disguise the truth."

I would not take his word, though he spoke honestly; the unconquerable desire I had to view at my ease all the treasures of the earth, and perhaps to possess them every time I chose to have that satisfaction, made me deaf to his remonstrances, nor could I be persuaded of a thing, which nevertheless was but too true, as to my great misfortune I very soon experienced.

Under this strong prejudice, I was fancying that, if this ointment had the power of enabling me to see all the treasures of the earth by applying it to my

left eye, it might perhaps have the power of giving me the disposal of them if it were applied to my right. Under this impression, I persevered in entreating the dervise to apply it himself round my right eye, but he constantly refused to do it. "After I have conferred on you so great a kindness," said he, "I cannot resolve to do you so great a mischief; consider well with yourself what misery it is to be deprived of sight, and do not yet reduce me to the sad necessity of complying with your request, to do what you will repent of as long as you live."

I carried my obstinacy to the extreme. "Brother," said I, with great firmness, "make, I beseech you, no further difficulty on the subject; you have hitherto consented very generously to every request I have made; would you wish me to part from you dissatisfied on a point of so little consequence? In God's name grant me this last favour; whatever be the result I shall never blame you; the fault will be entirely mine."

The dervise made every objection possible, but seeing it was in my power to compel him, "Since you are absolutely determined upon the matter," said he, "I shall proceed to satisfy you." He then took a little of this fatal ointment, and applied it upon my right eye, which I held closed. But, alas! when I came to open it, I perceived nothing with both my eyes but intense darkness, and I continued blind as you now see me.

"Ah, ill-omened dervise," cried I at the moment, "what you foretold is indeed come to pass! Fatal curiosity," added I; "insatiable desire of riches, into what abyss of misery have you plunged me! Well do I now know that I have brought it all upon myself; but, my dear brother," I cried still to the dervise, "so charitable and beneficent as you are, among the many wonderful secrets with which you are acquainted, know you not one by which my sight may be restored?"

"Unhappy wretch!" returned the dervise, "hadst thou taken my advice thou wouldst have avoided this misfortune; thou hast thy deserts; and the blindness of thy heart has brought upon thee the blindness of thy eyes. It is true I am in possession of secrets; this thou must know even in the short time that I have been with thee; but I have not one by which I can restore to thee thy sight. Address thyself to God if thou thinkest there be any such remedy. He only can bestow it on thee. He had given thee riches of which thou wert unworthy. He hath taken them away from thee, and is going to give them by my hands to those who will not be so ungrateful for them as thou art."

The dervise said no more to me, and I had nothing to reply; he left me alone, covered with confusion, and overwhelmed with an excess of grief quite inexpressible; after having collected my fourscore camels he led them away, and pursued his journey to Balsora.

I entreated him not to leave me in this miserable situation, and to help at least in conducting me to the next caravan; but he was deaf to my cries and my prayers. Thus deprived of sight and of everything I possessed in the world, I should have died of grief and hunger, if the next day a caravan returning from Balsora had not been disposed in charity to take me up and bring me back to Bagdad.

Thus, from a situation equal to that of princes, if not in power and might, at least in wealth and magnificence, I found myself at once reduced to beggary, and without resources. I could do nothing but ask alms, and this has been my employment to the present hour; but to expiate my crime towards God, I have imposed upon myself the punishment of a blow from every charitable person who shall have compassion on my misery.

You see, then, Commander of the Faithful, the motive of what appeared to your majesty yesterday so strange, and of what must have incurred your dis-

pleasure; I again ask your pardon as your slave, and submit myself to any punishment you think I have deserved. And if your majesty will deign to judge of the penance I have imposed upon myself, I am persuaded you will think it too light, and much below my crime.

When the blind man had finished his history, the caliph said to him: "Baba Abdalla, your sin is great; but God be praised, that you are sensible of its enormity, and have submitted to this public penance to the present time. It is enough, but you must for the future continue to ask pardon of God in each of those prayers which your religion obliges you daily to offer; and that you may not be interrupted by the necessity of begging for subsistence, I shall supply you with a pension during your life, of four drachms of silver daily, which my grand vizier shall pay you; do not therefore return till he has executed my orders."

At these words, Baba Abdalla threw himself prostrate at the throne of the caliph; and as he rose, he made his acknowledgments with a wish for every kind of happiness and prosperity.

The caliph Haroun Alraschid, satisfied with the history of Baba Abdalla and the dervise, spoke to the young man, whom he had seen treat his mare so ill, and asked him his name, as he had done that of the blind man, when the young man said he was called Sidi Nouman.

"Sidi Nouman," said the caliph, then, to him, "I have seen horses exercised all my life, and have often exercised them myself, but never before did I see any pressed in so cruel a manner as that in which I saw yours pressed yesterday in the square full of people, to the great offence of the spectators, who loudly complained of it; I was not less offended at it than they were, and was very near discovering myself, contrary to my design, in order to put a stop to this irregularity. By your air, however, you did not seem to be savage and cruel; and I am willing to believe you did not behave thus without some reason, since I understand that it is not the first time, but that for a good while past you have daily thus ill-treated your mare; I would know what the reason is, and I have ordered you to come hither that you may inform me of it; tell me exactly the state of the case, and disguise nothing."

Sidi Nouman readily understood what the caliph required of him; this recital occasioned him much uneasiness; he changed colour many times, and notwithstanding his endeavours to the contrary, could not help showing a very great degree of embarrassment. It was, however, necessary for him to resolve on giving an account of the matter. Therefore, before he spoke, he prostrated himself on his face before the throne of the caliph; and after rising he attempted to satisfy him, but he remained silent, less awed by the majesty of the caliph in whose presence he was, than affected by the nature of the recital he had to make.

Whatever impatience the caliph naturally had on the subject of obedience to his commands, he nevertheless evinced no displeasure at the silence of Sidi Nouman; he saw clearly that a degree of courage was necessary for him, which seemed to fail him in his presence, or that he had been intimidated by the tone in which he had been addressed, or in short, that in what he had to say there might be something which he was very desirous of concealing.

"Sidi Nouman," said the caliph, to give him courage, "endeavour to recover yourself, and suppose that it is not to me you are about to relate what I require of you, but to some one of your friends who requests you to do so. If there is anything in the narrative which you think will give uneasiness, and which you suppose I may take offence at, I forgive you from this moment; dismiss, then, all your anxiety, speak to me with sincerity, and dissemble no more with me than you would with any one of your best friends."

Sidi Nouman, taking courage from these last words of the caliph, then began his narrative: "Commander of the Faithful," said he, "whatever emotion mortals must experience when they approach your throne, I feel, nevertheless, strength sufficient to believe that this emotion of respect will not so prevent my speaking, as to fail in the obedience I owe your majesty, in giving you satisfaction upon every other point but that which is now required of me. I dare not say I am the most perfect of men; yet I am not wicked enough to have committed, nor even to have had the wish to commit anything contrary to the laws, so as to have occasion to dread their severity. Good, however, as my intention has always been, I acknowledge that I am not free from sins of ignorance. Such, in fact, has been the case with me; I do not say, therefore, that I rely upon the pardon your majesty has been pleased to grant before you have heard me. I submit on the contrary to your justice, and am ready to be punished if I have deserved it: I confess, that the manner in which I have for some time treated my mare, as your majesty has witnessed, is strange, barbarous, and of very mischievous example; but I hope you will find the motive for it justifiable, and that you will think me more worthy of compassion than punishment; but I ought not to keep your majesty longer in suspense by a tiresome preface. This then is my story.

THE HISTORY OF SIDI NOUMAN.

My birth is not of sufficient importance to deserve the attention of your majesty. With regard to property, my ancestors, by their good management, left me as much as I could desire, to live in a creditable way, without ambition, but entirely independent.

With these advantages, the only thing I could want, in order to render my happiness complete, was to meet with an amiable wife, to be the object of my tenderest affection, and who, loving me in return, would be willing to share with me that happiness: but this God was not pleased to grant me. On the contrary, he gave me one who, the very day after our marriage, began to exercise my patience in a manner not to be conceived but by those who have been exposed to a similar trial.

As the custom is, that our marriages should take place without seeing or knowing the woman we are to espouse, your majesty must be aware that a husband has no right to complain if he finds the wife which has fallen to his lot frightfully ugly, nor an absolute cheat, and that her good manners, her good sense, and her good behaviour, may compensate any slight imperfection of person.

The first time I saw my wife without her veil after she had been brought to me with the usual ceremonies, I rejoiced to find that I had not been deceived in the account which had been given me of her beauty: she suited my taste, and I was pleased with her.

The day after our marriage, we had a dinner of several dishes; I came into the room where the table was set, and as I did not see my wife there, I desired she might be called: after having made me wait some time, she came; I dissembled my impatience, and we sat down together at the table; I began with some rice, which I took in the common way with a spoon. My wife, on the contrary, instead of making use of a spoon as everybody does, drew from a case which she had in her pocket a sort of bodkin, with which she began to take some rice, and carried it to her mouth by single grains, for no more would it take up at a time.

Surprised at this manner of eating, "Aminè," said I, for that was her name, "is this the way you have learned to eat rice in your family? Do you do this because you are a little eater; or perhaps you wish to count the grains, that you may not eat more at one time than at another? If you do this from a principle of saving, and to teach me not to be extravagant, you have nothing to apprehend on this score; I can assure you we shall not be ruined by our table. We have enough, thank God, to live at our ease, and need not deprive ourselves of necessaries. Be under no constraint, my dear Aminè, and eat as freely as you see me eat." The easy air in which I made these remonstrances, would, I supposed, have drawn from her some obliging answer; but without giving me a single word, she went on eating in the same manner; and in order to give me more uneasiness, she took these single grains of rice at still greater intervals; and instead of eating of the other dishes with me, she only carried to her mouth in the most deliberate manner small crumbs of bread, scarcely enough to satisfy a sparrow.

I was offended with her obstinacy: I imagined, nevertheless, kindly making excuses for her, that she had not been accustomed to eat with men, and certainly not with a husband, before whom she had perhaps been told to show a degree of restraint, which, from simplicity, she carried too far.

I supposed, too, she might have eaten something just before; or if not, that she reserved herself to eat alone, and more at her ease: these considerations prevented my saying to her anything further, which might frighten her, or show her any mark of my dissatisfaction. After dinner, I parted from her with an air, as if I had found no reason to be displeased at her extraordinary behaviour, and left her quite alone.

The same thing happened again at supper. The next day, and every time we eat together, she behaved just in the same manner. I saw clearly that it was not possible a woman could live on the very little sustenance she took, and that there must be some mystery in the matter which I could not discover; this made me resolve to dissemble. I pretended to pay no regard to her conduct, hoping that in time she would accustom herself to live with me in the manner I wished; my hopes were vain, and it was not long before I was convinced of it.

One night, when Aminè thought me fast asleep, she rose very softly, and I observed she dressed herself so carefully as not to make the least noise, for fear she should awaken me; I could not conceive the reason why she thus broke in upon her rest, and my curiosity to know what was the meaning of this, made me pretend a sound sleep. She finished dressing herself, and in a moment walked out of the room without making the least noise.

The instant she left the room, I rose, and throwing my cloak across my shoulder, I had just time to see through a window which looked into the court, that she opened the street-door and went out. I ran immediately to the door, which she had not quite closed; and favoured by the light of the moon, I followed her, till I saw her go into a burying-place near our house; I then gained the end of a wall which reached the burying-place, and after having taken proper care not to be seen, I perceived Aminè with a female Ghoul.

Your majesty knows that Ghoules of either sex are demons which wander about the fields. They commonly inhabit ruinous buildings, whence they issue suddenly and surprise passengers, whom they kill and devour. If they fail to meet with travellers, they go by night into burying-places to dig up dead bodies and feed upon them. I was both surprised and terrified when I saw my wife with this Ghoul. They dug up together a dead body which had been buried that very day, and the Ghoul several times cut off pieces of the flesh, which they both ate as they sat upon the edge of the grave. They conversed together

with great composure during their savage and inhuman repast ; but I was so far off that it was impossible for me to hear what they said, which, no doubt, was as extraordinary as their food, at the recollection of which I still shudder.

When they had finished their horrid meal, they threw the remains of the carcase into the grave, which they filled again with the earth they had taken from it ; I left them thus employed, and returned to my house with all speed. I went in, but left the door partly open as I had found it ; and when I reached my chamber, I lay down again and pretended to be asleep.

In a short time Aminé followed me, without making the least noise ; she undressed herself, and came to bed again with great satisfaction, as I supposed, at having succeeded so well without my perceiving what had happened. With my mind full of the idea of the savage and abominable deed which I had just witnessed, and shocked at finding myself in bed with her who had been concerned in it, it was a long time before I could get to sleep again. I did, however, sleep again, or rather I slumbered in so slight a way, that the first voice, which was the call to public prayers at daybreak, awoke me ; I dressed myself, and went to the mosque.

When prayers were ended, I went out of the town and passed the morning walking in the gardens, and considering the part I was to take in order to make my wife change her manner of living. I rejected every violent method which occurred to my mind, and I resolved to employ only gentle means to wean her from the wretched inclinations she had manifested. In this train of thinking, I was insensibly led to my own house, which I entered just at the hour of dinner.

When Aminé saw me, she ordered dinner, and we sat down at the table ; as I found she still persisted in taking the rice grain by grain, "Aminé," said I, in a manner perfectly composed, "you know what reason I had to be surprised the day after our marriage, when I perceived you taking your rice only in such small quantities, and in a way that would have offended any other husband than myself ; you know, too, that I did no more than let you know the uneasiness it occasioned me, entreating you to eat of the other dishes at table ; and that care was taken that there should be variety, in order to try your taste with some of them. Ever since, you have seen our table served in the same manner, changing occasionally some of the dishes, that we might not be obliged to eat always the same things. My remonstrances have been, however, to no purpose, and to this hour you have continually behaved in the same manner, and given me the same uneasiness ; unwilling to lay you under any constraint, I have frequently held my tongue, and should be sorry if what I am now saying should give you the smallest concern ; but Aminé, I beseech you, tell me, are not the dishes of our table quite as good as the flesh of a dead person ?"

I had scarcely uttered these last words than Aminé, who perfectly understood that I had observed what passed at night, fell into a most inconceivable passion ; her face was in a flame, her eyes almost started from her head, and she foamed with rage.

The terrible state in which I saw her quite alarmed me ; I became motionless, and in no situation to defend myself against the horrible ill-designs which she was meditating, and at which your majesty will be astonished. In the height of her fury she took a glass of water which was near her, and dipping her fingers into it, she muttered a few words which I could not understand, threw the water in my face, and said in a furious tone, "Wretch, take the punishment of thy curiosity, and become a dog."

Scarcely had Aminé, whom I had not yet known to be a sorceress, uttered these hellish words, than all at once I found myself changed into a dog. The surprise and astonishment in which I was, at a change so sudden and so little

expected, prevented at first my running away, which gave her an opportunity of taking a stick to beat me, and in truth she made use of it upon me with so much violence that I scarcely know how I avoided being killed on the spot; I thought to escape from her rage by running into the court, but she pursued me thither with the same fury; and nimble as I tried to be, in order to avoid her strokes by darting from side to side, I could not escape them, and she made me feel them in great abundance. Tired at last with pursuing and beating me, and mortified that she had not killed me, as she was eager to do, she imagined a new method of effecting it; she partly opened the door into the street, in order to crush me as I should pass to make my escape. Though a dog, I suspected her malicious design; and as imminent danger often suggests a thought how to preserve life, by observing her eyes and her motions, I took my opportunity so well as to defeat her vigilance, pass through the door quickly enough to save my life, and escape her vengeance with no further mischief than having the end of my tail a little squeezed.

The pain I felt made me cry and howl as I ran along the street; this occasioned other dogs to run after and worry me. To avoid their pursuit I ran into the shop of a man who dressed and sold sheeps' heads, tongues, and feet: and there I got shelter.

My host at once took my part very compassionately, driving away the dogs which were in pursuit of me, and which attempted to come quite into his house. I, for my part, had at first no other concern than to steal into some corner, and get out of their sight: nevertheless, I did not find in this man's house all the refuge and protection I expected. He was one of those exceedingly superstitious people, who pretend that dogs are such unclean animals, that water and soap enough cannot be found to wash their clothes, if by accident a dog has touched them in passing by. After the dogs which had pursued me were driven away, he did everything he could, many times on the same day, to drive me out: but I hid myself and baffled his attempts. So I passed the night in spite of him within the shop, and I had much need of a little rest to recover myself from the ill-treatment Aminé had bestowed upon me.

That I may not tire your majesty with circumstances of little importance, I will not stay to particularise the sad reflections which, at that time, I made upon my metamorphosis. I will only remark, that the next day, my host having gone out before daylight to make his purchases, he returned laden with sheeps' heads, tongues, and feet; and that, after he had opened his shop, and while he was exposing his goods to view, I stole out of my corner, and was going away when I saw a great many dogs of the neighbourhood, drawn thither by the smell of the meat, collected round the shop of my host, waiting till he threw them something; these I joined, and then stood in the same suppliant posture.

My host, as it seemed to me, considering that I had not eaten anything since I had taken refuge with him, distinguished me by throwing in my way larger pieces and more frequently than to the other dogs. When he had put an end to his bounty, I was desirous of returning to his shop; looking up to him, and wagging my tail, in a way to make him understand that I again requested this favour of him; but he was not to be prevailed upon, he forbade my entrance with a stick in his hand, showing not the least mark of compassion for me, so that I was forced to take myself off.

After passing a few houses, I stopped at a baker's shop. This baker, unlike the melancholy dealer in sheeps' heads, seemed of a lively and merry disposition, as indeed he proved. He was then at breakfast, and though I showed no signs that I wanted to eat, he nevertheless threw me a piece of bread. I did not instantly and greedily seize it, as dogs commonly do, but looked up to him with a cast of countenance, and movement of my tail, expressive of my gratitude.

He took my civil attention in good part, and smiled. I was not hungry; however, as I thought it would please him, I took a piece of the bread and ate it very slowly, to intimate that I did so out of compliment to him. He observed all this, and allowed me to remain near his shop. There I continued sitting, and turned towards the shop, to signify to him that, at present, I wanted only his protection. This he afforded me, and took such notice of me besides, as to give me assurance that he would let me into his house. I made him understand that I would not come in without his permission. He did not take this amiss; on the contrary, he showed me a place where I might lie without being any inconvenience to him, and I took possession of the spot, and maintained it all the time I was at his house.

I was extremely well treated there, and he neither breakfasted, dined, nor supped, without giving me as much as I wanted; and on my part I had for him all the attachment and fidelity which he could expect from my gratitude. My eyes were constantly fixed upon him, and he never stirred about the house but I was always ready to follow. I did the same whenever he went on business into the city. I was the more exact in this matter, because I saw my attentions pleased him; and often when he intended to go out, without giving me reason to suspect it, he called me to him by the name which he had given me; at hearing my name, I darted immediately from my kennel into the street; I ran and leaped, and played my gambols before the door. I never ceased from this playfulness till he came out; and then I was his constant companion, either following or running before him, and from time to time looking at him, to show him how happy I was.

I had been in this house some time, when one day a woman came to buy some bread. In payment for this, she gave my host among some good money one bad piece. The baker, who noticed the bad piece of money, gave it back to the woman, and asked her to change it. She refused to take it again, and said it was good. My host maintained the contrary; and in the dispute, "The piece of money," said he to the woman, "is so visibly counterfeit, that I am sure my dog, who is but a brute, would know it. Come here," said he, calling me immediately by my name. Hearing his voice, I leaped gently upon the counter, and the baker, throwing before me the pieces of money: "See," added he, "if there is a bad piece of money among these." I looked over all the pieces, and putting my foot upon the bad one, I separated it from the rest, looking in my master's face as if to show it him.

The baker, who had referred the matter to my judgment without much thought, and merely to divert himself, was extremely surprised to see that I hit upon it at once. The woman knowing it to be bad, had nothing to say, and was obliged to give another instead. As soon as she was gone, my master calling some of his neighbours and telling them what had happened, enlarged much on my great capacity. The neighbours wished to be witnesses of it, and of all the pieces of false money which they showed me mixed with others, there was not one on which I did not put my foot, and separate it from the good ones.

The woman, on her part, did not fail to relate to everybody she knew, whom she met in her way, what had just happened to her. The report of my ability in distinguishing false money was spread in a short time; not only in the neighbourhood, but through every part of the city. The whole day I was in no want of employment. It was necessary to satisfy all those who came to buy bread of my master, and to let them see what I could do. Everybody's curiosity was excited, and people came from the most distant parts of the town, to see proofs of my cleverness. My reputation procured my master so much business, he could hardly get through it. This lasted a long time, and my master could

not help confessing to his neighbours and his friends, that he had found a treasure in me.

My little knowledge did not fail to excite envy ; they laid snares to draw me away, and he was obliged to keep me always in his sight. One day a woman, attracted by this novelty, came as others had done, to buy bread. My place was usually on the counter ; she threw down six pieces of money before me, amongst which there was a bad one. I drew it out from the rest, and putting my foot on it, I looked at her, as if to ask her if that was not it. " Yes," said this woman, looking at me, " that is the false coin ; you are not mistaken." She paid for the bread she had just bought ; and as she was going out of the shop, she made a sign for me to follow her, unperceived by the baker. I was always on the watch for the means of delivering myself from so strange a state as mine was. I had remarked the attention with which this woman had examined me. I imagined she might possibly have some knowledge of my misfortune, and the wretched state to which I was reduced ; and I was not mistaken ; I let her go, however, and contented myself with looking after her. She went but a few steps before she returned ; and seeing that I only looked at her without stirring from my place, she again made a sign for me to follow her. Then, without further deliberation, as I saw the baker was busy in cleaning his oven, and that he did not attend to me, I leaped from the counter, and followed the woman, who appeared to me to be much pleased at having carried her point.

After going some way, she arrived at her house : she opened the door, and when she entered, " Come in," said she, " you shall have no reason to repent having followed me." When I was in the house, she shut the door, and led me to her apartment, where I saw a very beautiful young lady embroidering. This was the daughter of the charitable woman, who had brought me hither ; and she was skilful and experienced in the art of magic, as I afterwards found.

" Daughter," said the mother, " I have brought you the baker's famous dog, who so well knows how to distinguish false money from good. On the first report that was spread about him, you know I told you my idea of his being a man, changed into a dog by some wicked enchantment. To-day I took it into my head to go and buy some bread at this baker's. I have been witness of the truth of what has been said ; and I have had the art to make this astonishing dog, which has been the wonder of Bagdad, follow me. What say you, daughter, am I deceived in my conjecture ?" " You are not deceived, mother," replied the daughter, " as I shall soon convince you."

The young lady rose from her seat, took a vessel full of water, into which she dipped her hand, and throwing some of the water on me, she said : " If you were born a dog, remain a dog ; but if you were born a man, resume the figure of a man, by virtue of this water." At that moment, the enchantment was broken ; I lost the form of a dog, and saw myself once more a man.

Penetrated with gratitude for an obligation of such magnitude, I threw myself at the feet of the young lady ; and after having kissed the hem of her garment, " My dear deliverer," I cried, " I feel so strongly the excess of your goodness, which cannot be equalled, towards an unknown person, such as I am, that I conjure you to tell me what I can do, to show the extent of my gratitude ; or rather dispose of me as of a slave to whom you have an undoubted right. I am no longer my own master, I belong to you ; and that you may know him who is at your disposal, I will give you my history in a few words."

Then, after having told her who I was, I gave an account of my marriage with Asinè ; of my compliance, and my patience in supporting her ill-humour ; of all the extraordinary indignity with which she had treated me through her

inconceivable maliciousness; and I concluded by thanking the mother for the inexpressible happiness she had just procured me.

"Sidi Nouman," said the daughter, "talk no more of the obligations you say you are under to me; the consciousness of having served a worthy man, as you are, is a sufficient recompense; let us talk of Aminé, your wife—I knew her before her marriage; and as I knew she was a magician, she also was not ignorant that I had some knowledge of the same art, since we were taught by the same mistress. We even often met at the bath; but as we were of very different tempers, I took particular care to avoid every occasion that might lead to any connexion with her; and I found less difficulty in succeeding, as for the same reason she avoided, on her part, any intercourse with me. I am not then surprised at her wickedness. But to return to what immediately concerns you. What I have just done for you is not sufficient: I will finish what I have begun. It is not enough to have broken the enchantment, by which she had so cruelly excluded you from the society of men; you must punish her for it, as she deserves, by returning home, and resuming the authority that belongs to you: I will enable you to do so. Remain here, and converse with my mother; I shall soon return."

My deliverer went into a closet, and whilst she remained there, I had time again to express to the mother my sense of the obligation she, as well as her daughter, had laid me under. "My daughter," said she, "as you see, is not less skilful in the magic art than Aminé; but she makes such a proper use of it, that you would be astonished did you know the good she does, and has almost every day an opportunity of doing, by the knowledge she possesses. It is for this reason I have suffered, and still suffer, her to practise it, which I would never have permitted her to do, if I had perceived that in the most trifling instance she had made a bad use of her art."

The mother had begun to relate to me some of the wonderful things she had been witness to, when her daughter entered with a little bottle in her hand: "Sidi Nouman," said she, "my books, which I have just been consulting, inform me that Aminé is not at this moment at home, but will be there presently. From them I also learn, that the dissembler appeared before your servants to be very uneasy at your absence, and she had made them believe that whilst you were at dinner you recollected some business which obliged you to go out directly; that in going out you had left the door open and a dog had run in, and had even come into the room where she was finishing her dinner, and that she had driven him out by beating him with a stick. Return then to your house without loss of time with this little bottle, which I give you. When you have got admittance, wait in your chamber till Aminé returns; she will not make you wait long. When she comes back, go down into the court and present yourself to her. Her surprise will be so great at seeing you again, contrary to her expectation, that she will turn her back to fly from you: then throw some of this water upon her, which you will hold ready for that purpose, and in throwing it, pronounce these words boldly: 'Receive the punishment of thy wickedness.' I need not say any more to you; you will see the effect of it."

After these words of my benefactress, which I did not forget, as I had nothing further to stop me, I took leave of her and of her mother, with every expression of gratitude; and vowing eternally to remember the obligation they had conferred on me, I returned to my house.

Everything passed exactly as the young enchantress had foretold. It was not long before Aminé appeared. As she advanced, I presented myself to her with the water in my hand, ready to throw upon her. She gave a shriek, and as she turned round to regain the door, I threw the water upon her, pronouncing the

words the enchantress had taught me. Immediately she was changed into a mare, the same your majesty saw yesterday.

At the moment, and during the surprise in which she was, I seized her by the mane, and led her to the stable ; I put on a halter, and after having tied her up, reproaching her with her crimes and wickedness, I punished her by whipping her so long, that fatigue at last obliged me to desist. But I determined every day to inflict the same punishment.

"Commander of the Faithful," added Sidi Nouman, finishing his history, "I dare flatter myself your majesty will not disapprove of my conduct, and that you will confess, that a woman, so wicked and infamous, is treated with more indulgence than she deserves."

When the caliph saw that Sidi Nouman had nothing more to relate, "Your history is singular," said he, "and the wickedness of your wife admits of no excuse, for which reason I do not absolutely condemn the chastisement you have hitherto inflicted on her, but I would have you consider how great her punishment is, to be reduced to the level of beasts, and I wish you would content yourself with letting her do penance in this degraded state. I would even command you to go and solicit the young enchantress, who has caused this metamorphosis, to disenchant her, but that the obstinacy and incorrigible hardheartedness of magicians is so well known to me, that I should fear the effects of her vengeance against you might be more cruel than in the first instance."

The caliph, by nature gentle and compassionate towards those who suffer, although they may deserve it, after having declared his will to Sidi Nouman, addressed himself to the third person, whom the grand vizier Giafar had introduced. "Cogia Hassan," said he, "in passing your house yesterday, it appeared so magnificent that I had the curiosity to inquire to whom it belonged. I was told that you had built it, after having followed a trade, the profits of which were hardly sufficient to support you. I also heard that you have not forgotten your former condition ; that you make a good use of the wealth which God has given you ; and that your neighbours speak well of you. This account pleases me, and I am persuaded that the means by which it has pleased Providence to bestow its gifts, must be extraordinary. I am curious to learn them from yourself, and it is to give me this satisfaction that I have sent for you. Speak to me, then, without reserve, that I may, from my own knowledge, have the pleasure of partaking of your happiness ; and that no suspicions may arise in your mind from my curiosity, and that you may not think I take any other interest in it but what I have just told you, I declare to you, that far from having any other design, I give you my protection, and you may enjoy your wealth in security."

Upon these assurances from the caliph, Cogia Hassan prostrated himself before the throne, touched with his forehead the carpet with which it was covered, and after he had risen, "Commander of the Faithful," said he, "any one who did not feel his conscience as pure and as clear as I feel mine, would have been embarrassed at receiving the order to appear before the throne of your majesty ; but as I have never had towards you any sentiments but those of respect and veneration, and as I have not done anything contrary to the obedience I owe to you and the laws, which could draw your indignation upon me, the only thing which troubles me is the fear of not being able to bear the splendour which surrounds you."

"Nevertheless, from the public report of the goodness with which your majesty receives and listens to the most inconsiderable of your subjects, I feel encouraged, and do not doubt but it will meet with sufficient confidence to

procure your majesty the satisfaction you require of me. It is this which your majesty has just made me experience in granting me your powerful protection, without even knowing whether I deserve it. I hope, nevertheless, you will still retain sentiments so favourable to me, when, in compliance with your commands, I shall have recited my adventures."

After this little compliment to conciliate the good-will and attention of the caliph, and after having remained some moments silent to recollect what he had to say, Cogia Hassan began in these terms.

THE HISTORY OF COGIA HASSAN ALHABBAL.

IN order to make your majesty comprehend the means by which I arrived at the great happiness I now enjoy, I must begin by speaking of two intimate friends, citizens of this very town of Bagdad, who are still living, and who can bear witness of the truth of what I relate : to them I am indebted for it after God, the first author of all good and all happiness. These two friends were called, the one Saadi, and the other Saad. Saadi, who is immensely rich, has always been of opinion, that a man cannot be happy in this world without such a fortune, and such great wealth, as shall enable him to live independently of every one. Saad thinks differently ; he allows that such a fortune as will procure the comforts of life is necessary, but he maintains that virtue ought to constitute the happiness of men, without any more attachment to the good things of this world than is proportionate to our real wants, and in the power of doing charitable actions. Saad is of this number, and he lives happily and contentedly in the situation in which he is placed. Thus, though Saadi is infinitely richer, their friendship for each other is nevertheless very sincere, and he, who is the most wealthy, does not look upon himself as superior to his friend. They have never had any dispute but upon this subject ; in everything else their union has been uninterrupted.

One day, in a conversation nearly on this subject as they themselves told me, Saadi asserted that the poor were not poor but when they were born in poverty ; or, being born rich, they had lost their fortunes by debauchery, or by some of those unlooked-for misfortunes which are not uncommon. "My opinion is," said he, "that the poor are poor only because they cannot come at a sum of money sufficiently large to draw them out of their misery by enabling them to exert their industry to improve their fortunes ; and my idea is, that if they could gain this point, and would make a proper use of this money, they would not only become rich, but in time they would be very opulent."

Saad was not convinced by the proposition of Saadi. "The means you propose to make a poor man become rich, do not appear to me to be so certain as you think them. Your thoughts on this matter are very equivocal, and I could support my opinion against yours by many good arguments, but they would lead us too far. I think at least, with as much probability, that a poor man may become rich by many other means, as well as with a sum of money. People often make, by accident, a larger and more surprising fortune than by such a sum of money as you talk of, whatever good management and economy they may make use of to increase it, by a well-conducted business."

"Saad," replied Saadi, "I perceive I shall not gain any advantage over you by persisting in supporting my opinion against yours ; I wish you to make an experiment, to convince you by giving, for example, such a sum as I think necessary, to one of those workmen, who have been poor from father to son, and who live by the labour of the day, and who die as poor as they are born. If I do not succeed, we will then try your plan."

Some days after this dispute, it happened that the two friends, in taking a walk, passed through that part of the town where I was at work at my business, as a rope-maker, which I had been brought up to by my father, who had himself been taught it by my grandfather, and he by our ancestors. My situation and dress sufficiently bespoke my poverty.

Saadi, who remembered Saadi's plan, said to him, "If you have not forgotten the engagement you entered into with me, there is a man," added he, pointing at me, "whom I have a long time seen working at his trade as a rope-maker, and always in the same state of poverty. He is a subject worthy of your liberality, and quite fit for the experiment, of which we spoke the other day." "I perfectly remember what passed," replied Saadi, "and I will now make the experiment you mention; I only waited for an opportunity, when we should be together, that you might witness it. Let us accost this man, and hear if he is really in the want he appears to be."

The two friends came to me, and as I saw they wished to speak to me, I left off working. They both gave me the common salutation of saying, "Peace be with you," and Saadi asked me my name. I returned them the same salutation, and to answer the question of Saadi, "Sir," said I, "my name is Hassan, and because of my employment, I am commonly known by the name of Hassan Alhabbal." "Hassan," returned Saadi, "as there is not any trade which does not support its master, I do not doubt that yours maintains you at your ease, and I am even astonished that in the length of time you have been engaged in it, you have not saved something, and that you have not bought a good stock of hemp to increase your business, as well for yourself as for the people you have hired to assist you, and to enable you, by degrees, to deal to a larger amount."

"Sir," I replied, "you will cease to be surprised that I do not make any savings, and that I do not take the method, as you say, to become rich, when I tell you, that though I work hard from morning till night, it is with difficulty I can earn enough to procure bread and vegetables for me and my family. I have a wife and five children, and not one of the latter is of an age to give me the least assistance. I must feed and clothe them; and in a family, be it ever so small, there are always a thousand necessary things which you cannot do without. Although hemp is not an expensive thing, one must nevertheless have money to purchase it, and that money is the first which I lay by from the sale of my goods, otherwise I should not be able to maintain my family. Judge, sir," I added, "whether it is possible for me to save, and thus better myself and my family. It is sufficient that we are contented with the little it pleases God to give us, and that he does not give us the knowledge and desire of what we cannot have; but we do not feel any wants, when we have enough to live in the way we are accustomed to, and are not under the necessity of begging."

When I had given this account of myself to Saadi, "Hassan," said he, "my wonder has ceased, and I comprehend all the reasons which oblige you to be contented with the situation in which you are; but if I made you a present of a purse with two hundred pieces of gold, would you not make a good use of it; and do you not think, that with this sum you would soon become as rich as the principal people in your business?" "Sir," I replied, "you appear to me to be so worthy a man, that I am convinced you do not mean to divert yourself at my expense, and that you are serious in the offer you make me: I dare then affirm without too much presumption, that a much less sum would be sufficient not only to make me as rich as the principal people in my business, but even to become in a little time richer myself than they are all together, in this great city of Bagdad, large and populous as it is."

The generous Saadi convinced me immediately that he was in earnest in



what he had said: he drew the purse from his bosom, and putting it in my hand, "Take it," said he, "there is the purse, and you will find in it exactly the two hundred pieces of gold; I pray God to bless you with it, and to give you grace to make the use of it I wish; and be assured that my friend Saad here, as well as myself, will have the greatest satisfaction in hearing that they have contributed to make you more happy than you now are."

When I had received the purse, and as soon as I had put it in my bosom, I was so transported with joy, and overwhelmed with gratitude, that I could not speak; and I could show no other marks of it to my benefactor than by putting out my hand to seize the border of his robe to kiss it; but he instantly withdrew it, and they continued their walk.

In returning to my work after they were gone, the first thought that occurred to me was, where I should for safety put the purse. In my little house I had neither box nor chest with a lock to it, nor any place where I could be sure it would not be discovered, if I concealed it. In this perplexity, as I had been used, like other poor people in my way of life, to hide the little money I had in the folds of my turban, I left my work, and went into my house, pretending to mend my turban. I took my precautions so well, that without my wife and my children perceiving it, I drew ten pieces of gold out of the purse, which I put aside for the most pressing wants, and wrapped up the remainder in the folds of the linen, which went round my cap. The principal expense of that day was to buy a good stock of hemp; then, as I had not had a bit of meat for a long time in my house, I went to the market and bought some for supper.

In returning home I held the meat in my hand, when a half-starved kite, without my being able to defend myself, darted upon it, and would have snatched it out of my hand, had I not held it firm against him. But alas! I had much better have let it go, and then I should not have lost my purse. The more resistance the kite found, the more determined he was to get the meat. He drew me from one side to the other, whilst he kept fluttering in the air, without quitting his hold; but it happened, unfortunately, that in the efforts I made to resist him, my turban fell to the ground.

Immediately the kite let go his hold, and seizing my turban, before I had time to take it up, he flew away with it. I uttered such piercing cries, that the men, women, and children in the neighbourhood were alarmed, and joined their cries with mine, to try to make the kite quit his hold.

By this method they sometimes succeed in making these voracious birds let go what they have taken up: but our cries did not frighten the kite: he carried my turban so far, that we quite lost sight of him; so it was useless for me to give myself the trouble and fatigue of running after him, to recover it.

I returned home very melancholy at the loss I had just sustained of my turban and my money. I was obliged to buy another, which was a further diminution of the ten pieces of gold I had taken out of the purse. I had already laid out part of it in buying hemp, and what remained was by no means sufficient to realize the fine hopes I had conceived.

What gave me the most uneasiness was the little satisfaction my benefactor would receive from his ill-placed liberality; when he should hear of my disaster, he would perhaps think it incredible, and would therefore only look upon it as a frivolous excuse.

Whilst the few pieces of gold which remained with me lasted, we felt the benefit of it, but I soon returned to my former situation, as totally unable to lessen the misery of it as ever. I did not however murmur. "God," said I, "has thought proper to try me, by giving me wealth at the time I least expected it; he has taken it from me almost at the same instant, because it pleased him to do so, and it was his. Let him be praised for it. As I then praised God

for the blessings he thought fit to bestow whatever it now pleases him to do, I submit to his will."

These sentiments had taken possession of me, whilst my wife, to whom I could not help communicating the loss I had just met with, and the way in which it happened, was inconsolable. In the trouble I then was, I accidentally mentioned before some of my neighbours, that in losing my turban I lost a hundred and ninety pieces of gold; but as my poverty was well known to them, and they could not believe it possible that I could get so large a sum by my labour, they only laughed, and the children laughed more than they did.

It was about six months after the kite had caused this misfortune, when the two friends passed at a little distance from the place in which I lived. This naturally brought me to the recollection of Saad. He said to Saadi, "We are not far from the street in which Hassan Alhabbal lives; let us go there and see if the two hundred pieces of gold that you gave him have in any degree contributed to put him in the way to be at least in a better situation than that in which we found him." "I wish to do so," replied Saadi; "I have thought of him for some days past, and I proposed to myself great pleasure from the satisfaction I should have in making you a witness to the success of my scheme. You are going to see a great alteration in him; and I question whether we shall know him again."

The two friends had already turned a corner, and entered the street at the time Saadi was still speaking. Saad, who first saw me at a distance, said to his friend: "It seems to me that you promise yourself success too soon. I see Hassan Alhabbal, but there does not appear to me to be any alteration in his person; he is as ill dressed as he was when we first accosted him. The only difference I can discover is, that his turban is not quite so dirty; see if I am mistaken."

In coming near, Saadi, who now also perceived me, saw that Saad was right; and he knew not to what cause to attribute the little change he saw in my appearance. He was so much astonished, that it was not he who spoke when they came up to me.

Saad having saluted me as usual, said, "Well, Hassan, we do not ask you how your affairs have gone on since we saw you; the two hundred pieces of gold must have contributed to make them much more prosperous." "Gentlemen," replied I, addressing them both, "I am much mortified at being obliged to inform you that your wishes, your expectations, and your hopes, as well as mine, have not been attended with the success you had reason to expect, and which I had promised myself. You will hardly believe the extraordinary circumstance which has happened to me. I assure you, nevertheless, on the word of a man of honour, and as such you ought to believe me, that nothing is more true than what you are going to hear." I then told them my adventure, with all the circumstances which I have just related.

Saadi gave no credit to my story: "Hassan," said he, "you make a jest of us; and you wish to deceive me. What you tell us is not to be believed. Kites do not attack turbans, they are only in search of what will satisfy their hunger. You have done as all people of your situation generally do. If they gain an extraordinary advantage, or any good fortune unexpectedly happens to them, they leave their work, they amuse themselves, they regale themselves, and they live well, as long as the money lasts; and when it is done, they find themselves in the same miserable situation, and with the same wants they before had; you remain thus distressed because you deserve to be so, and you render yourself unworthy the benefits conferred upon you." "Sir," I replied, "I suffer patiently all these reproaches, and I am ready to bear still more cruel ones, if you can find in your heart to utter them; but I hear them with more

patience, because I am conscious I do not deserve them. The circumstance, strange as it is, is so well known in this place, that there is not a creature who will not bear witness to it. If you will inquire, you will find I have not imposed upon you. I confess I had never heard that kites would carry off turbans, but the thing has happened to me, like many other things which never have happened, but may nevertheless happen every day."

Saad took my part, and he related to Saadi so many histories of kites not less surprising than mine, some of which he had himself known, that the latter again drew his purse out of his bosom. He counted two hundred pieces of gold into my hand, which I soon put into my bosom for want of a purse. When Saadi had finished telling out this sum, "Hassan," said he, "I wish once more to make you a present of two hundred pieces of gold, but take care to put them in a safe place, that you may not lose them so unfortunately as you lost the others; and mind that they procure you the benefits which the others ought to have done." I acknowledged that the obligation I owed him for this second favour was still greater than the first, as I did not deserve it after what had befallen me, and that I would not forget anything which might enable me to take advantage of his good advice. I would have continued, but he did not give me time; he quitted me, and proceeded on his way with his friend.

After they were gone, I returned to my work; I then went into my house, my wife and children being at that time from home. I laid aside ten pieces of gold out of the two hundred; and I wrapped the hundred and ninety pieces in some linen and tied it up. It was necessary to hide the linen in a safe place. After having thought for some time about it, I determined to put it at the bottom of a large earthen pot full of bran, which stood in a corner where I supposed neither my wife nor children would be likely to find it. My wife returned soon after, and as I had but little hemp left, without telling her I had seen the two friends, I said I was going out to buy some.

I went out, but whilst I was gone to make this purchase, a man who sells fullers' earth, such as women make use of in the bath, happened to pass through the street and cried it.

My wife who had not any of this earth, called to the man, and as she had not any money, she asked him if he would take a pot of bran in exchange for some fullers' earth. He desired to see it; my wife showed him the jar, and the bargain was struck. She received the fullers' earth, and he carried away the pot of bran.

I returned laden with as much hemp as I could carry, followed by five porters laden as I was, with the same merchandise, with which I filled a little room that I had set apart for it in my house. I satisfied the porters for their trouble, and when they were gone, I sat down to rest myself after my fatigues. I then cast my eyes towards the place where I had left the jar of bran, and saw it was not there.

I cannot express my surprise to your majesty, nor the effect it had upon me at that moment. I hastily asked my wife what was become of it, and she told me of the bargain she had made, as a thing by which she thought herself a great gainer. "Ah! miserable woman," I cried, "you are ignorant of the mischief you have done to me, to yourself, and to your children, in making a bargain which has ruined us without resource. You thought you had only sold some bran, and with this bran you have enriched your seller of fullers' earth with a hundred and ninety pieces of gold, which Saadi, accompanied by his friend, had just given me a second time."

It was in vain that my wife was in despair when she was told the great fault she had through ignorance committed. She lamented, she beat her breast, tore her hair and her clothes. "Wretch that I am!" cried she, "I am unworthy

to live after having made such a cruel mistake. Where can I find the man who sold the fullers' earth? I know him not; he has never but this once passed through our street, and probably I shall never see him again. Ah, my husband," added she, "you have done very wrong; why did you keep an affair of such importance so secret from me? This would not have happened if you would have placed some confidence in me." I should never have done if I were to repeat to your majesty everything her grief made her say. You are not ignorant how eloquent women are in their affliction.

"Wife," said I, "be composed; you are not aware that you will draw all the neighbours about us by your cries and your tears; it is not necessary they should be made acquainted with our distress; far from sympathizing in our misfortune or giving us consolation, they will take a pleasure in laughing at your simplicity and mine. The best thing we can do is to conceal our loss, and support it patiently in such a way that it may not be suspected, and to submit to the will of God. So far from murmuring, let us bless him that of the two hundred pieces of gold he had given us, he has withdrawn only a hundred and ninety, and that he has left us ten in his goodness, which, as I have just employed them, will bring us some relief."

However right my arguments were, my wife was at first but little disposed to relish them; but time, which softens the greatest and most insupportable evils, made her yield at last to them.

"We live poorly, it is true," said I to her; "but what have the rich that we have not? Do we not breathe the same air? Do we not enjoy the same light and warmth from the sun? The ease and conveniences they have might make us envy their happiness, if they did not die as we do. To take things in their best light, possessed of the fear of God, which we ought to have above all things, the advantages the rich have over us are so trifling that we ought not to think of them."

I will not tire your majesty any longer with my moral reflections. My wife and I were consoled, and I continued my work with my mind as easy as if I had not met with such mortifying losses one so soon after the other.

The only thing which vexed me, and which often occurred to me, was when I asked myself how I could support the presence of Saadi when he should come to inquire how I had employed his two hundred pieces of gold, and to what degree I had bettered my circumstances by his liberality; and I saw no other remedy than resolving to submit to the confusion I must feel on this occasion, although I had not brought this misfortune upon myself by any fault of mine this second time any more than in the first instance.

The two friends were a longer time in returning to inquire into my situation than they had been before. Saad had often proposed it to Saadi, but he always wished to defer it. "The longer we put off going to him," said he, "the more wealthy Hassan will be grown, and the more satisfaction I shall have from seeing it."

Saad had not the same opinion of the effects of his friend's liberality. "You think, then," replied he, "that your present will have been better employed this time by Hassan than the first. I advise you not to be too sanguine, for fear of feeling too much mortified if the contrary should have happened." "But," replied Saadi, "it does not happen every day that a kite should carry away a turban. Hassan has been caught once, he will be very careful not to be so a second time." "I do not doubt it," returned Saad, "but some other accident, which neither you nor I can imagine, may have happened. I say once more, moderate your joy, and do not be more prepossessed with the idea of his happiness than his unhappiness. To tell you what I think, and what I have always thought, however angry you may be at knowing my opinion, I

have a presentiment that you will not have succeeded, and that I shall succeed better than you have done, in proving that a poor man can sooner become rich by any other means than with money."

At last one day, when Saad was with Saadi, after a long dispute on this subject, "It is too much," said Saadi; "I will this very day inform myself how it is. Let us immediately go and see which of us is successful." The two friends set out, and I saw them at a distance. I was much affected, and I was on the point of quitting my work and running to hide myself, that I might not appear before them. Intent on my work, I pretended not to see them, and I never raised my eyes to look at them till they were so near that they gave me the salutation of "Peace be with you." I could not then in civility avoid it. I immediately cast my eyes on the ground, and in relating to them my last misfortune with its circumstances, I let them know the reason why they found me as poor as the first time they saw me.

"You may say," I added in concluding, "that I ought to have hidden the hundred and ninety pieces of gold in any other place than in a jar of bran, which might that very day be taken out of my house. But this vessel had stood there and been made this use of for many years, and whenever my wife sold her bran, which she did when it was full, the jar had always remained. Could I foresee that on that very day, in my absence, a man who sold fullers' earth should pass at the very time that my wife was without money, and that she should make such an exchange with him? You will perhaps tell me that I ought to have acquainted my wife with it, but I can never believe that such prudent people as I am sure you are, would have given me such advice; had I hidden the money in any other place, what certainty could I have had that it would there have been in greater safety? Sir," said I, addressing myself to Saadi in particular, "by one of the impenetrable secrets of his will, which we ought not to fathom, it has not pleased God that I should be enriched by your liberality. He will have me poor, and not rich; I shall always feel the obligation to you the same as if your generosity had had the entire effect you wished it to have."

I ceased speaking, and Saadi, who took up the conversation, said to me, "Though I wish to persuade myself that all you have just told us is as true as you intend to make us believe it is, and that it is not to conceal your debaucheries or your bad economy, as it possibly may be, I must nevertheless take care how I proceed, in obstinately making an experiment which might in the end ruin me. I do not regret the four hundred pieces of gold I have lost in endeavouring to take you out of your poverty. I have done it for the love of God, without expecting any other recompense than the pleasure of having served you. If anything were capable of making me repent what I have done, it would be, the having fixed on you, rather than another person, who would, perhaps, have derived more advantage from it." Then turning towards his friend, "Saad," continued he, "you may know by what I have just said, that I do not entirely give up the point to you. You are, however, at liberty to make the trial that you have so long maintained in opposition to me. Convince me that there are other means than that of money, which can make the fortune of a poor man in the way I expect, and that you mean, and take Hassan for your subject. Whatever you can give him, I cannot persuade myself that he will become more rich than he might have done with four hundred pieces of gold."

Saad held a piece of lead in his hand, which he showed to Saadi. "You have seen me," replied he, "pick up this bit of lead, which lay at my foot; I am going to give it to Hassan, and you will see how valuable it will be to him." Saadi burst into a violent fit of laughter, and ridiculed Saad. "A

piece of lead!" cried he, "and of what value can the sixth part of a farthing be to Hassan? What will he do with it?" Saad, in giving me the piece of lead, said to me, "Let Saadi laugh, and do not refuse to take it; you will one day tell us the good fortune it will have brought you."

I thought that Saad could not be in earnest, and that he was only amusing himself. I took, however, the piece of lead, thanking him for it; and, to satisfy him, I put it carelessly into my bosom. The two friends left me to finish their walk, and I went on with my work.

At night, when I undressed myself to go to bed, and took off my sash, the piece of lead Saad had given me, and which I had never thought of since, fell to the ground: I took it up, and put it into the first place that occurred.

That very night it happened, that one of my neighbours, a fisherman, in preparing his nets, found that he wanted a piece of lead; he had not any to repair the loss of it, and at that hour he could not buy any, as the shops were all shut. It was, however, absolutely necessary for him to get some, that he might procure food the next day for himself and his family, by going to fish two hours before daylight. He expressed his vexation to his wife, and sent her to ask his neighbours to supply his wants.

The wife obeyed her husband: she went from door to door on both sides of the street, but could not get any lead. She carried back this answer to her husband, who asked her, naming many of his neighbours, if she had knocked at their doors. She said she had; "And at Hassan Alhabbal's?" added he: "I will lay a wager you have not been there." "It is true," replied the wife, "I have not been there, because it is so far off: and if I had taken the trouble of going there, do you think I should have met with any? I know by experience his house is exactly the place to which you should go when you want nothing." "That does not signify," said the fisherman; "you are a lazy creature; I wish you to go there; though you have been a hundred times without meeting what you went in search of, you will now perhaps find there the lead that I want. I desire you therefore to go."

The fisherman's wife went out grumbling and scolding, and came and knocked at my door. I had been some time asleep, but I awoke and asked what she wanted. "Hassan Alhabbal," said the woman, raising her voice, "my husband wants a little bit of lead to mend his nets; and if by chance you have any, he begs you will give him a piece."

The piece of lead that Saad had given me, was so fresh in my memory, especially after what had happened to me in undressing, that I could not have forgotten it. I answered my neighbour, that I had some; and if she would wait a moment, my wife should bring it her. My wife, who was also awakened by the noise, rose, and by feeling about, found the lead in the place where I told her it was. She half opened the door and gave it her neighbour.

The fisherman's wife was delighted at not having come so far in vain: "Neighbour," said she to my wife, "the service you have done my husband and me is so great, that I promise you all the fish my husband shall catch in the first throw of his nets, and I assure you he will make good my words."

The fisherman, charmed to find beyond his hopes the lead he so much wanted, approved the promise his wife had made us. "I take it very kindly of you," said he; "you have done just as I should." He finished mending his nets, and went to fish two hours before daylight, as usual. In the first throw of his nets he caught only one fish, but it was more than a foot long, and large in proportion; he had afterwards many other draughts, which were all successful; but the fish were much smaller than the first he caught; there was but one that came near it in point of size.

When the fisherman had done fishing and returned home, his first care was

to think of me; and I was extremely surprised, as I was at work, to see him come towards me, bringing this fish. "Neighbour," said he, "my wife promised you last night all the fish that I caught in the first throw of my nets, as an acknowledgment for the service you have done us, and I approved her promise. God sent me only this one for you, and I beg you to accept it; if he had pleased to fill my nets, they would in like manner have been yours. Take it, I entreat you, such as it is, with as much good-will as if it had been more considerable."

"Neighbour," replied I, "the piece of lead I sent you is so mere a trifle, that it does not deserve such a return. Neighbours ought to assist each other; I have only done for you what I should suppose you would do for me on a like occasion. I should therefore refuse your present, if I were not persuaded you have a pleasure in making it. I even think you would be offended if I treated you in this manner. I take it then, since you wish me to do so, and I thank you for it."

Our civilities ended there, and I carried the fish to my wife: "Take this fish," said I, "that our neighbour, the fisherman, has just brought me in return for the piece of lead, that he last night sent to us for. It is, I believe, all we have to hope from the present Saad made me yesterday, though he promised me it would bring me good luck." I then told her I had again seen the two friends, and what had passed between them and me.

My wife was embarrassed at the sight of so large a fish: "What would you have me do with it?" said she. "Our gridiron is only fit to broil small fish, and we have not anything large enough to boil it in."

In cleaning the fish, my wife took from its entrails a large diamond, which she supposed to be glass. She had heard of diamonds, but even if she had seen or handled them, she would not have had sufficient knowledge of the matter to have made the distinction. She gave it to the youngest of our children as a plaything; and her brothers and sisters, who wished to see it and handle it by turns, gave it to one another to admire its beauty and brilliancy.

At night, when the lamp was lighted, our children, who continued their sport of parting with the diamond to look at it by turns, perceived that it became brighter in proportion as my wife hid the light of the lamp by carrying it about to prepare the supper, and this made the children snatch it from one another to try the experiment. But the little ones cried when the great ones did not give them so much time to look at it as they wished, and they were obliged to let them have it to appease them.

As trifles are capable of amusing children, and causing disputes amongst them, which often happen, neither my wife nor I paid any attention to what was the subject of this noise and bustle, with which they almost stunned us. It ceased at last when the bigger children were placed at table to sup with us, and my wife had given the little ones their share.

After supper the children got together, and began again to make the same noise as before. I then inquired what they were disputing about: I called the eldest to me, and asked him what was the reason they made so much noise. "Father," said he, "it is on account of a piece of glass, which shines brightest when we turn our backs to the lamp." I made him bring it me, and tried the experiment myself. This appeared to me very extraordinary, and led me to ask my wife what this piece of glass was: "I don't know," said she; it is a piece of glass I took out of the belly of the fish in cleaning it."

I did not imagine any more than she did that it was anything but a piece of glass. I nevertheless carried my experiment a little further; I bid my wife hide the lamp in the chimney. She did so, and I saw the supposed piece of

glass gave so great a light that we could have done without the lamp to go to bed by. I made her put it out, and I placed the piece of glass at the edge of the chimney to give us light. "Here," said I, "is another advantage that the piece of glass my friend Saad gave me procures us, in saving us the expense of oil."

When my children saw that I had extinguished the lamp, and that the piece of glass supplied the place of it, this wonder excited so much admiration amongst them that they shouted so loud as to be heard throughout the neighbourhood. My wife and I increased the noise by trying to make them hold their tongues, and we could not entirely carry our point till they were in bed and asleep, after having entertained themselves a considerable time in their way with the wonderful light of the piece of glass.

My wife and I went to bed soon after them, and I went to my work as usual early the next morning, without thinking any more of the piece of glass. It cannot appear strange that this should happen to a man like me, who was accustomed to see glass, and who had never seen diamonds, and if I had seen them I did not know enough about them to be acquainted with their value.

I must inform your majesty in this place, that between my house and that of my nearest neighbour there was only a very slight partition of lath and plaster which separated us. This house belonged to a very rich Jew, by trade a jeweller, and the room in which he and his wife slept joined the partition. They were already in bed and asleep, when my children made the greatest noise, which awoke them, and it was a long time before they could get to sleep again.

The next day, the Jew's wife, as much in her husband's as her own name, came to complain to my wife how much their first sleep had been disturbed. "My good Rachel" (so the Jew's wife was called), said my wife, "I am very sorry for what has happened, and I hope you will excuse it. You know what children are, a trifle will make them laugh and a trifle will make them cry. Come in, and I will show you the cause of your complaint."

The Jewess entered, and my wife took up the diamond, since in short it was one, and a very singular one. It was still on the chimney-piece. She then gave it to her: "See here," said she, "it was this piece of glass which caused all the noise you heard last night." Whilst the Jewess, who was acquainted with all sorts of stones, was examining this diamond with admiration, my wife told her how she had found it in the belly of a fish, and everything that had happened respecting it.

When my wife had done speaking, the Jewess, who knew her name, said, in returning the diamond to her, "Aishach, I think with you that it is nothing but glass, but as it is better glass than common, and as I have a piece which very much resembles it, which I sometimes wear, and will match with it, I will buy it of you if you will sell it." My children, who heard the selling of their plaything talked of, broke in upon their conversation by crying out and begging their mother to keep it, and to pacify them she was forced to promise not to part with it.

The Jewess, obliged to go away, went out, and before she left my wife, who went with her to the door, she begged her, in a low voice, if she intended selling the piece of glass, not to let anybody see it without giving her notice of it.

The Jew went to his shop early in the morning, which was in that quarter of the town set apart for jewellers. His wife went to him, and told him the discovery she had just made. She gave him an account of the size, of nearly the weight, the beauty, the fine water, and the brightness of the diamond, and, above all, of the singular property which, from my wife's account, it had of

shining in the night,—a relation the more credible as it appeared to be artless. The Jew sent back his wife, ordering her to treat with mine for it, to offer at first such a trifling sum as she might judge proper, and to augment it in proportion to the difficulties she found; and, in short, to purchase the diamond, let the price be what it would.

The Jewess, according to her husband's direction, spoke to my wife in private, without waiting to know whether she was determined to sell the diamond, and asked her whether she would take twenty pieces of gold for it. For a piece of glass, as she supposed it to be, my wife thought this a considerable sum. She would not, however, give her an answer, but only told the Jewess she could not listen to her proposal till she had first spoken to me.

During this transaction I left work and went home to dinner, whilst they were talking at the door. My wife stopped me, and asked if I would consent to sell the piece of glass she found in the belly of the fish for twenty pieces of gold, which the Jewess our neighbour had offered for it. I did not give an immediate answer; I reflected on the certainty with which Saad had promised me in giving me the piece of lead, that it would make my fortune. And as the Jewess thought my silence arose from the contempt in which I held the sum she offered, "Neighbour," said she, "I will give you fifty pieces for it; will that satisfy you?"

As I saw the Jewess so quickly raised the sum from twenty to fifty pieces of gold, I kept firm, and told her she was far below the price for which I expected to sell it. "Neighbour," replied she, "take a hundred pieces of gold; it is a great deal of money. I do not even know whether my husband will approve my offering so much." At this new rise, I told her that I would have a hundred thousand pieces of gold for it; that I saw that the diamond was worth more, but to please her and her husband, who were our neighbours, I would be contented with this sum, which I would certainly have for it; and that if they refused to take it at that price, other jewellers would give me more.

The Jewess herself confirmed me in my determination by the haste she showed to conclude the bargain, by offering repeatedly as far as fifty thousand pieces of gold, which I refused. "I dare not," said she, "offer more without my husband's leave; he will return to-night, and I shall take it as a favour if you will have patience to wait till he has spoken to you and seen the diamond." This I promised her I would do.

At night, when the Jew came home, he learned from his wife the little progress she had made with my wife or with me; the offer she had tempted us with of the fifty thousand pieces of gold, and the favour she had asked me. The Jew watched the time I left work, and came into my house. "Neighbour Hassan," said he, on approaching me, "will you be kind enough to show me the diamond that your wife showed to mine?" I desired him to come in, and showed it him.

As it was almost dark, and the lamp not yet lighted, he knew immediately by the light the diamond gave, and by its great brightness in the palm of my hand, which was illuminated by it, that his wife had given him a true account. He took it, and after having examined it a long time, and constantly admiring it: "Well, neighbour," said he, "my wife tells me she has offered you fifty thousand pieces of gold, but that you may be satisfied, I offer you twenty thousand more." "Neighbour," returned I, "your wife might have told you that the price I have set upon it is a hundred thousand; you must give me that or the diamond will remain with me; there is no medium." He bargained a long time, in hopes I should take something less for it, but he could not get me to make any abatement; and the fear he had that I should show it to other

jewellers, as indeed I should have done, determined him not to leave me till the bargain was concluded at my own price. He told me he had not a hundred thousand pieces of gold in his house, but that the next day at the same hour he would deposit the whole sum, and he brought me that very day two bags of a thousand pieces each in order to secure the bargain.

The next day, whether the Jew borrowed money of his friends, or whether he was one of a company of jewellers, I know not; be that as it may, he paid me the sum of a hundred thousand pieces of gold, which he brought me at the time he engaged for, and I delivered up the diamond.

The sale of the diamond being thus concluded, and I become rich, infinitely beyond my hopes, I returned thanks to God for his goodness and his bounty. I should have gone and thrown myself at the feet of Saad, to have testified my gratitude, had I known where he lived. I should have done the same with respect to Saadi, to whom in the first instance I was indebted for my happiness, although his good intentions towards me were not successful.

I thought afterwards of the proper use I ought to make of so considerable a sum of money. My wife, whose head was already filled with the vanity common to her sex, wished me to buy directly handsome clothes for herself and her children, to purchase a house, and furnish it with elegance. "Wife," said I, "it is not with these sort of expenses that we ought to begin: trust to me, what you ask you shall have in time. Although the use of money is to expend it, we must nevertheless proceed in such a way, that we may have a fund from which we may draw without the fear of its being exhausted; this engages my mind, and to-morrow I shall set about establishing this fund."

I employed the whole of the following day in going to a set of good workmen of my own trade, who were in better circumstances than I had hitherto been, and giving them money in advance, I engaged them to work for me in different kinds of rope-making, each according to their ability and power, with a promise not to make them wait, but to be punctual in paying them for their labour, according to the work they did for me. The day after, I made the same engagement with other ropemakers of this sort to work for me, and since that time, all that are in Bagdad are employed by me, well satisfied with my exactness in performing my promise.

As this great number of workmen must produce work in proportion, I hired warehouses in different places, and in each I placed a clerk, as much to receive the work as to sell it by wholesale and retail: and soon by this method my profits and revenue were considerable.

Afterwards, in order to bring my warehouses together, which were much dispersed, I bought a very large house, which occupied a great space of ground, but which was in a ruinous state. I pulled it down; and in its place I built that which your majesty saw yesterday; but however handsome it may appear, it contains only warehouses which are necessary to me, and such apartments as I want for myself and family.

Some time had passed after I had left my former small house to fix myself in my new house, when Saadi and Saad, who had not thought of me till that time, remembered me, and agreed to inquire after me. One day, passing through the street in their walk where they had formerly seen me, they were much astonished not to find me employed in my small trade of rope-making, as they had before seen me. They asked what was become of me? Whether I was living or dead? Their wonder increased, when they heard that he they inquired after was become a very great merchant, and was no longer called simply Hassan, but Cogia Hassan Alhabbal, that is to say, the merchant Hassan the rope-maker, and who had built in a street, which was mentioned, a house that had the appearance of a palace.

The two friends came into this street in search of me, and in the way, as Saadi could not conceive that the piece of lead Saad had given me was the foundation of so large a fortune: "I am extremely happy," said he to Saad, "at having made the fortune of Hassan Alhabbal. But I cannot approve of the two falsehoods he told me, to draw from me four hundred pieces of gold instead of two hundred; for, to attribute his wealth to the piece of lead you gave him is impossible, and nobody any more than myself could suppose it."

"That is your idea," replied Saad, "but I am of a different opinion, and I do not see why you should do Cogia Hassan the injustice to suppose him a liar. You will permit me to think he told you the truth, and that the piece of lead I gave him was the sole cause of his good fortune; but this is a matter which Cogia Hassan will soon explain to us."

Engaged in such conversation as this, the two friends entered the street in which my house is situated. They asked which it was, and were shown it; in looking at the front, they could hardly believe they were not mistaken. They knocked at the door, and my porter opened it. Saadi, who was fearful of committing an incivility if he took the house of a man of high rank for that he was in search of, said to the porter, "They have pointed this house out to me for that of Cogia Hassan Alhabbal; tell us whether we are mistaken." "No, sir, you are not mistaken," answered the porter, opening the door still wider, "it is his house: walk in, he is in his apartment, and you will find among the servants some one to announce you."

The two friends were introduced, and I knew them again the moment I saw them. I arose from my seat, ran to them, and would have kissed the border of their robe; they prevented me, and I was obliged, in spite of myself, to suffer them to embrace me. I begged them to be seated on a large sofa, at the same time pointing to a smaller one for four people, which was placed nearer my garden. I requested them to take the upper place, but they wished me to occupy it.

"Gentlemen," said I to them, "I have not forgotten that I am the poor Hassan Alhabbal, and were I any other, and even not under the obligations to you that I am, I know what is due to you: I entreat you, therefore, not to overwhelm me with confusion." They took their proper places, and I took mine opposite to them.

Saadi then began the conversation; and addressing me: "Cogia Hassan," said he, "I cannot express the pleasure I feel in seeing you nearly in the situation I wished you when I made you the present—I do not speak of it to reproach you—of the two hundred pieces of gold which I gave you each time, and I am persuaded that the four hundred pieces have made the wonderful change in your fortune which I see with so much satisfaction. One thing only gives me concern, which is, that I cannot understand what reason you could have had for twice concealing the truth from me, in alleging the losses you met with by accidents, which then appeared, and still appear to me, incredible. Was it that when we saw you the last time you had made so little progress in bettering your circumstances with the two sums, that you were ashamed to confess it? I cannot but believe it was so, and I think you are going to confirm me in my opinion."

Saad listened to this conversation with great impatience, not to say indignation, which he expressed by casting down his eyes and shaking his head.

He suffered him, however, to finish his speech, without opening his lips; when he had done, "Saadi," said he, "pardon me, if before Cogia Hassan answers you, I speak first, to tell you that I am surprised at your prepossession against his sincerity, and that you persist in not giving credit to the assurances

he formerly gave you. I have already told you, and I now repeat it, that I at first believed him, upon the plain recital of the two accidents which happened to him; and say what you will, I am sure they were true. But let him speak, we shall be informed by himself which of us two have done him justice."

After what the two friends had spoken, I began; and, addressing them both, "Gentlemen," said I to them, "I should condemn myself to a perpetual silence concerning the explanation you require of me, were I not certain that the dispute you have had on my account is not capable of breaking the tie of friendship which unites your hearts. I will then explain myself, since you desire it; but first I protest to you, it is with the same sincerity that I formerly made known to you what had happened to me." I then exactly related the circumstances to them as your majesty has heard them, without forgetting the most trifling part.

My protestations made not the least impression on the mind of Saadi, nor did they tend to lessen his prejudices. When I had ceased speaking, "Cogia Hassan," replied he, "the adventure of the fish, and of the diamond found in his belly, appears to be as incredible as the turban's being carried off by the kite, and the jar of bran being exchanged for the fullers' earth. But be that as it may, I am not less convinced that you are no longer poor, but rich; and as my sole intention was that you should become so by my means, I am most sincerely rejoiced at it."

As it grew late, they rose to take leave; I got up also, and stopping them, "Gentlemen," said I to them, "suffer me to request a favour of you, and I entreat you not to refuse me; it is, that you will permit me to have the honour of giving you a frugal supper, and afterwards each a bed, that I may carry you to-morrow, by water, to a small house that I have purchased in the country to enjoy the air occasionally, from whence I will bring you back by land the same day, furnishing you both with horses from my stable." "If Saad has not business which calls him elsewhere," said Saadi, "I most readily consent to it." "I have not any," replied Saad, "that can interfere with my enjoying your company. We must then," continued he, "send to your house and mine, to let our families know that they may not expect us." I sent for a slave, and whilst they gave him this commission, I ordered supper.

Whilst supper was preparing, I showed every part of my house to my benefactors, who found it very large, and well adapted to my situation. I call them both my benefactors, without distinction; for, without Saadi, Saad had never given me the piece of lead; and, but for Saad, Saadi would not have addressed himself to me, to give me the four hundred pieces of gold, which I consider as the source of my happiness. I led them back to the same room, where they asked me many questions upon the particulars of my business; and my answers were such, that they appeared fully satisfied with my conduct.

We were at length informed that supper was served. As the table was set in another apartment, I conducted them there. They were much pleased with the manner in which it was lighted up, also with the neatness of the room and the sideboard; and, above all, with the dishes, which they found extremely to their taste. I treated them also with vocal and instrumental music during the repast; and when supper was removed, I introduced a company of dancers of both sexes, and other amusements, endeavouring to show my benefactors, as much as possible, how penetrated I was with gratitude towards them.

The next day, as I had fixed with Saadi and Saad to set out early in the morning, that we might enjoy the freshness of it, we were at the water's side before the sun rose. We embarked in a very neat boat, spread with carpets, which waited for us; and by favour of six good rowers, and the current of the water, in about an hour and a half we arrived at my country house.

On landing, the two friends stopped, less to behold the beauty of the outside of the building than to admire its advantageous situation in point of prospect, which was neither too much bounded nor too extensive, but pleasing on every side. I carried them through the apartments; I made them remark how well the rooms were connected one with another, and with the offices and other conveniences; and they thought the whole cheerful and pleasant.

We went afterwards into the garden, where they were most pleased with a grove of every kind of orange and citron trees, planted at equal distances in walks, bearing fruit and flowers, which perfumed the air, and each tree watered separately by a perpetual stream of water, conveyed directly from the river. The shade, the freshness, even in the greatest heat of the sun, the gentle murmur of the water, the harmonious warbling of an infinite number of birds, and many other delightful things, struck them so much, that they stopped almost at every step, sometimes to express their obligation to me for having brought them into so delicious a place, sometimes to congratulate me on the purchase I had made, and to pay me many other obliging compliments.

I carried them to the end of this grove, which is very long and extensive, where I pointed out to them a wood of large trees that terminated my garden; I then led them to a small room, open on all sides, but shaded by clumps of palm-trees, which did not intercept the prospect. I invited them to enter, and repose themselves on a sofa there, covered with carpets and cushions.

Two of my sons, whom we had found in the house, and whom I had sent there with their preceptor some time before for the benefit of the air, quitted us on entering the grove; and, as they were looking for birds' nests, they perceived one amongst the branches of a large tree. They were at first tempted to climb it, but as they had neither strength nor skill for such an undertaking, they showed it to a slave I had given them, who always attended them, and desired him to get it.

The slave climbed the tree, and when he was got to the nest, he was much astonished to see it was built in a turban. He brought away the nest, just as it was, came down from the tree, and showed the turban to my children; but as he thought I should like to see it also, he told them so, and gave it to my eldest son to bring to me. I saw them at a distance running to me with an expression of pleasure, common in children who have found a nest; and presenting it to me, "Father," said the eldest, "do you see this nest in a turban?" Saadi and Saad were not less surprised than I was at this novelty; but I was much more astonished than they were, in recognising the very turban that the kite had carried away from me. In the midst of my wonder, after I had examined it and turned it every way, I asked the two friends if they had any recollection of the turban I wore the day they first did me the honour of accosting me."

"I do not suppose," returned Saad, "that Saadi, any more than I, paid any attention to it, but neither he nor I can doubt, if the hundred and ninety pieces of gold are found there." "Sir," I replied, "you need not doubt its being the same turban. Independent of my knowing it again, I perceive also, by its weight, it cannot be any other; and you will yourself be convinced of it if you will give yourself the trouble of feeling it." I presented it to him, after having taken out the birds, which I gave to my children; he took it in his hands, and gave it to Saadi to feel how heavy it was. "I am ready to believe it to be your turban," said Saadi; "I shall nevertheless be still more convinced, when I shall see the hundred and ninety pieces of gold in specie."

"At least, gentlemen," added I, when I had taken the turban, "examine it well, I entreat you, before I touch it; and observe, that it has not very lately been placed in the tree; and that the state in which you see both that and the

nest, which is so neatly put together without the help of man, are certain proofs that it has been there ever since the kite flew away with it, and that he let it drop, or placed it on the tree, the branches of which prevented its falling to the ground. Do not be offended that I make this observation, as I have so great an interest in removing every suspicion of deceit on my part." Saad seconded me in my design. "Saadi," said he, "this regards you and not me, as I am perfectly convinced that Cogia Hassan does not impose upon us."

Whilst Saad was speaking, I took off the linen, which was put round the bonnet in many folds, making part of the turban, and I drew from it the purse, which Saadi knew to be the same he had given me. I emptied it on the carpet before them, and I said to them, "Gentlemen, here are the pieces of gold, count them yourselves, and see if they do not turn out right." Saad arranged them in tens, to the number of a hundred and ninety; and then Saadi, who could not reject so manifest a truth, addressed me thus: "Cogia Hassan," said he, "I allow that these hundred and ninety pieces of gold cannot have assisted in enriching you; but the other hundred and ninety, which you hid in the jar of bran, at least as you would make me believe, may have contributed to do it."

"Sir," I replied, "I have told you the truth with respect to the last sum of money, as well as to this. You would not have me retract, and tell you a lie?" "Cogia Hassan," said Saad to me, "let Saadi enjoy his opinion; I consent with all my heart, that he should think you indebted to him for the half of your good fortune, by means of the last sum, provided he will acknowledge that I have contributed the other half by means of the piece of lead I gave you, and that he does not call in question the valuable diamond, found in the belly of the fish." "Saad," replied Saadi, "I will think what you please, provided you will leave me at liberty to believe that money can only be gotten by money." "What!" returned Saad, "if by chance I might find a diamond worth fifty thousand pieces of gold, and can get that for it, should I acquire this sum by money?"

The dispute ended here; we arose and went back to the house just as dinner was served, and we sat down to table. After dinner I left my guests at liberty to pass the great heat of the day in reposing themselves, and went to give orders to my steward and gardener. I rejoined them, and we then conversed on indifferent subjects, till the great heat was over, when we returned into the garden, where we remained in the cool almost till sunset. Then the two friends and I mounted our horses, and, followed by a slave, we arrived at Bagdad about two hours after dark, by moonlight.

I know not by what negligence of my servants it happened, that there was no corn for the horses on my return home. The granaries were shut, and they were too distant, and it was too late to get any.

In searching about in the neighbourhood, one of my slaves found a jar of bran in a shop; he bought the bran, and brought it in the jar, promising to carry it back the next day. The slave emptied the bran into the manger, and in spreading it about, that the horses might each have their share, he felt under his hand a piece of linen tied up, which was very heavy; he brought me the linen without having touched it, in the state he found it, and presenting it to me said, perhaps it was the linen he had often heard me speak of, in relating my history to my friends.

Quite overjoyed, I said to my benefactors, "Gentlemen, it pleases God that we should not separate till you should be fully convinced of the truth, which I have never ceased to assure you of. Here," continued I, addressing myself to Saadi, "are the other hundred and ninety pieces of gold, which I received from your hands: I know it by the linen rag that you see." I untied the rag, and

counted the money before them. I ordered also the jar to be brought to me : I knew that again, and I sent it to my wife to ask her if she knew it, desiring she might not be told what had just happened. She recognised it immediately, and sent me word that it was the very jar she exchanged full of bran for some fullers' earth.

Saadi candidly acknowledged his error ; he said to Saad, "I give up my opinion, and I allow with you, that money is not always a certain means to get money and become rich."

When Saadi had finished speaking, "Sir," said I to him, "I dare not propose to you to take back the three hundred and eighty pieces of gold, which it has now pleased God to bring to light, to do away the opinion you entertained of my knavery. I am sure you did not make the present with the design of having it returned to you. On my part I do not wish to take advantage of it, contented as I am with what he has bestowed on me by other means. But I hope you will consent to my distributing them to-morrow amongst the poor, that God may reward us both for it."

The two friends slept the second night at my house, and the next day, after having embraced me, they returned home, well satisfied with the reception I had given them, and with knowing that I did not make an ill use of the good fortune which, after God, I owed to them.

I have not failed to go and pay my respects to them separately at each of their houses ; and since that time I esteem the permission they have given me to continue to see them, and to cultivate their friendship, as a great honour.

The caliph Haroun Alraschid paid so much attention to Cogia Hassan, that he only perceived by his silence, that he had finished his history. He then said to him, "Cogia Hassan, it is a long time since I have heard anything which has given me so much pleasure as the very wonderful manner by which it has pleased God to render you happy in this world. It belongs to you to continue to show your gratitude to Him, by the good use you make of the blessings He has bestowed ; I wish to inform you, that the diamond, which has made your fortune, is in my treasury, and on my part I am charmed to learn by what means it came there. But as it is possible there may still remain some doubts in the mind of Saadi with respect to the singularity of this diamond, which I look upon as a thing the most precious and most worthy of admiration of anything I possess, I wish you to bring Saad and Saadi hither, that my treasurer may show it the latter, as he may still be a little incredulous, that he may know that money is not always a certain means for a poor man to acquire great wealth in a short time, and without any trouble. I command you, also, to relate your history to my treasurer, that he may commit it to writing, and preserve it with the diamond."

In finishing these words, as the caliph had shown by an inclination of his head to Cogia Hassan, Sidi Nouman, and Baba Abdalla, that he was satisfied with them, they took their leave in prostrating themselves before his throne, after which they retired.

The sultana Scheherazadè would have begun another story, but the Sultan of the Indies, who perceived that the day was breaking, deferred hearing it till the following morning.

THE HISTORY OF ALI BABA, AND THE FORTY ROBBERS
KILLED BY ONE SLAVE.

IN a certain town of Persia, sire, situated on the very confines of your majesty's dominions, there lived two brothers, one of whom was called Cassim, and the other Ali Baba. Their father at his death, left them but a very moderate fortune, which they divided equally between them. It might, therefore, be naturally conjectured, that their riches would be the same; chance, however, ordered it otherwise.

Cassim married a woman who, very soon after her nuptials, became heiress to a well-furnished shop, a warehouse filled with merchandise, and considerable property in land; he thus found himself on a sudden quite at his ease, and became one of the richest merchants in the whole town.

Ali Baba, on the other hand, who had taken a wife in no better circumstances than he himself was, lived in a very poor house, and had no other means of gaining his livelihood, and supporting his wife and children, than by going out to cut wood in a neighbouring forest, and carrying it about the town to sell on three asses, which formed the whole of his capital.

Ali Baba went one day to the forest, and had very nearly finished cutting as much wood as his asses could carry, when he perceived a thick cloud of dust rising very high in the air, which appeared to come from the right of the spot where he was, and to be advancing towards him. He looked at it attentively, and perceived a numerous company of men on horseback, who were approaching at a quick pace.

Although that part of the country was never spoken of as being infested by robbers, Ali Baba nevertheless conjectured that these horsemen were of that denomination. Without, therefore, at all considering what might become of his asses, his first and only care was to save himself. He instantly climbed up into a large tree, the branches of which, at a very little height from the ground, spread out so close and thick, that they were separated only in one small space. He placed himself in the midst of these with the greatest assurance of security, as he could see everything that passed without being observed. The tree itself also grew at the foot of a sort of isolated rock, considerably higher than the tree, and so steep, that it could not be easily ascended.

The men, who appeared stout, powerful, and well mounted, came up to this very rock, and there alighted. Ali Baba counted forty of them, and was very sure, both by their appearance and mode of equipment, that they were robbers. Nor was he wrong in his conjecture; for they were, in fact, a band of robbers, who without committing any depredations in the neighbourhood, carried on their system of plunder at a considerable distance, and only had their place of rendezvous in that spot; and what he almost immediately saw them do, confirmed him in this opinion. Each horseman took the bridle off his horse, and hung over its head a bag filled with barley, which he had brought with him; and having all fastened their horses to something, they took their travelling bags, which appeared so heavy, that Ali Baba thought they were filled with gold and silver.

The robber who was nearest to him, and whom Ali Baba took for their captain, came with his bag on his shoulder close to the rock, at the very spot where the tree was, in which he had concealed himself. After the robber had made his way among some bushes and shrubs that grew there, he very distinctly pronounced these words, OPEN, SESAME, and which Ali Baba as distinctly heard. The captain of the band had no sooner spoken them, than a



ALI BABA AND THE FORTY ROBBERS.

door immediately opened ; and after having made all his men pass before him, and go in through the door, he entered also, and the door closed.

The robbers continued within the rock for a considerable time ; and Ali Baba was compelled to remain on the tree and wait with patience for their departure, as he was afraid either some or all of them might come out, if he left his present situation and endeavoured to save himself by flight. He was nevertheless strongly tempted to creep down, seize two of their horses, mount one and lead the other by the bridle, and thus driving his three asses before him, gain the town. The uncertainty, however, of his success, made him follow the safer mode.

At length the door opened, and the forty robbers came out ; the captain, contrary to what he did when they entered, first made his appearance. After he had seen all his troop pass out before him, Ali Baba heard him pronounce these words, SHUT. SESAMÉ. Each man then returned to his horse, put on its bridle, fastened his bag, and then mounted. When the captain saw that they were all ready to proceed, he put himself at their head, and they departed the same way they came.

Ali Baba did not immediately come down from the tree, because he thought that they might have forgotten something, and be obliged to come back, and that he should thus get into some scrape. He followed them with his eyes as far as he could see, and then did he, in order to be more secure, come down till a considerable time after he had lost sight of them. As he recollected the words the captain used, he made use of to open and shut the door, he had the curiosity to try if the same effect would be produced by his pronouncing them. He made his way, therefore, through the bushes till he came to the door, which they concealed. He went up to it, and called out, "Open, Sesamé," when the door instantly flew wide open !

Ali Baba expected to find only a dark and obscure cave, and was much astonished at seeing a large, spacious, well-lighted, and vaulted room, dug out of the rock, and higher than a man could reach. It received its light from the top of the rock, cut out in a similar manner. He observed in it a large quantity of provisions, numerous bales of rich merchandise piled up, silk stuffs and brocades, rich and valuable carpets, and besides all this, great quantities of money, both silver and gold, some in heaps, and some in large leather bags, placed one on another. At the sight of all these things, it seemed to him that this cave had been used not only for years, but for centuries, as a retreat for robbers, who had regularly succeeded each other.

Ali Baba did not hesitate long as to the plan he should pursue. He went into the cave, and as soon as he was there, the door shut ; but as he knew the secret by which to open it, this gave him no sort of uneasiness. He paid no attention to the silver, but made directly for the gold coin, and particularly that which was in the bags. He took up at several times as much as he could carry, and when he had got together what he thought sufficient for loading his three asses, he went and collected them together, as they had each strayed to some distance. He then brought them as close as he could to the rock, and loaded them ; and in order to conceal the sacks, he so covered the whole over with wood, that no one could perceive anything else. When he had finished all this, he went up to the door, and had no sooner pronounced the words, "Shut, Sesamé," than it closed ; for although it shut of itself every time he went in, it remained open on coming out only by command.

This being done, Ali Baba took the road to the town ; and when he got to his own house, he drove his asses into a small court, and shut the gate with great care. He threw down the small quantity of wood that covered the bags, and carried the latter into his house, where he laid them down in a regular manner before his wife, who was sitting upon a sofa.

His wife felt the sacks to know their contents; and when she found them to be full of money, she suspected her husband of having stolen them, so that when he brought them all before her, she could not help saying, "Ali Baba, is it possible that you should—" He immediately interrupted her, "Peace, my dear wife," exclaimed he, "do not alarm yourself, I am not a thief, unless that title be attached to those who take from thieves. You will change your bad opinion of me, when I shall have told you my good fortune." He emptied the sacks, the contents of which formed a heap of gold, that quite dazzled his wife's eyes; and when he had done so, he related his whole adventure from beginning to end; and as he concluded, he above all things conjured her to keep it secret.

His wife, recovering from her alarm, began to rejoice in the fortunate circumstance which had befallen them; and was going to count over the money that lay before her, piece by piece. "What are you going to do?" said he; "you are very foolish, wife; you would never have done counting. I will immediately dig a pit to bury it in; we have no time to lose." "It is proper, though," replied the wife, "that we should know nearly what quantity there may be. I will go for a small measure in the neighbourhood, and whilst you are digging the pit, I will ascertain how much there is." "What do you want to do, wife," replied Ali Baba, "is of no use, and if you will take my advice, you will give up the intention. However, do as you please, only remember not to betray the secret."

In order to satisfy herself, the wife of Ali Baba set off and went to her brother-in-law, Cassim, who lived a short distance from her home. She was from home, so she begged his wife to lend her a measure for a few minutes. She inquired if she wanted a large or a small one, to which Ali Baba's wife replied, that a small one would suit her: "That I will, with pleasure," said the sister-in-law; "wait a moment and I will bring it you." She went to the kitchen, and knowing the poverty of Ali Baba, she was curious to know what sort of grain his wife wanted to measure; she therefore put some tallies in the measure, which she did without its being perceptible. She returned with it, and giving it to the wife of Ali Baba, apologized for having made her wait so long, with the excuse that she had some difficulty to find it.

The wife of Ali Baba returned home, and placing the measure on the table, filled it with gold, and then emptied it at a little distance on the sofa, till she had measured the whole: her husband by this time having dug the pit for its concealment, she informed him how many measures there were, with which the both were very well contented. While Ali Baba was burying the gold, his wife, to prove her diligence and punctuality, went back with the measure to her brother-in-law, but without observing that a piece of gold had stuck to the bottom of it. "Here, sister," said she, on returning it, "you see I have not kept measure long; I am much obliged to you for lending it to me."

The wife of Ali Baba had scarcely turned her back, when Cassim's wife looked at the bottom of the measure, and was inexpressibly astonished to see a piece of gold sticking to it. Envy instantly took possession of her breast. "What!" said she to herself, "Ali Baba measures his gold! Where can this miserable wretch have obtained it?" Her husband, Cassim, as was before mentioned, was from home: he had gone as usual to his shop, from whence he would not return till evening. The time of his absence appeared an age to her, in the state of impatience she was then in, to acquaint him with a circumstance which she concluded would surprise him as much as it had done her.

On his return home, his wife said to him, "Cassim, you think you are rich, but you are deceived; Ali Baba must have infinitely more wealth than you are possessed of; he does not count his money as you do, he measures it." Cassim

deman'ded an explanation of this enigma, and she unravelled it by acquainting him of the expedient she had used to make the discovery, and showing him the piece of money she had found adhering to the bottom of the measure ; a coin so ancient that the name of the prince which was engraven on it, was unknown to her.

Far from feeling satisfaction at the good fortune which his brother had met with to relieve him from poverty, Cassim conceived implacable jealousy on the occasion. He passed almost the whole night without closing his eyes. The next morning before sunrise he went to him. He did not treat him as a brother : that endearing appellation had been forgotten since his marriage with the rich widow. "Ali Baba," said he, addressing him, "you are very reserved as to your affairs ; you pretend to be poor and miserable, and a beggar, and yet you measure your money." "Brother," replied Ali Baba, "I do not understand your meaning, pray explain yourself." "Do not pretend ignorance," resumed Cassim ; and showing him the piece of gold his wife had given him, "how many pieces," added he, "have you like this, that my wife found sticking to the bottom of the measure yesterday ?"

From this speech Ali Baba conjectured that Cassim, and his wife also, in consequence of his own wife's obstinacy, were already acquainted with what he was so interested to conceal from them ; but the discovery was made, and nothing could now be done to remedy the evil. Without showing the least sign of surprise or vexation, he frankly owned to his brother the whole affair, and told him by what chance he had found the retreat of the thieves, and where it was situated ; and he offered, if he would agree to keep it secret, to share the treasure with him.

"This I certainly expect," replied Cassim in a haughty tone ; and added, "but I desire to know also the precise spot where this treasure lies concealed, the marks and signs which may lead to it, and enable me to visit the place myself, should I feel myself inclined, otherwise I will go and inform the officer of police of it. If you refuse to comply, you will not only be deprived of all hope of obtaining any more, but you will even lose that you have already taken ; and I, instead, shall receive my portion for having informed against you."

Ali Baba, led rather by his natural goodness of heart than intimidated by the insolent menaces of a cruel brother, gave him all the information he desired, and even told him the words he must pronounce, both on entering the cave and on quitting it. Cassim made no further inquiries of Ali Baba ; he left him with the determination of preventing him in any further views he might have on the treasure. Full of the hope of possessing himself of the whole, he set off the next morning before break of day with ten mules charged with large hampers, which he proposed to fill, still indulging the prospect of taking a much larger number in a second expedition, according to the sums he might find in the cave. He took the road which Ali Baba had pointed out, and arrived at the rock and the tree, which from description he knew to be the same that had concealed his brother. He looked for the door, and soon discovered it. Having pronounced "Open, Sesame," the door obeyed ; he entered, and it immediately after closed. In examining the cave, he was in the utmost astonishment to find much more riches than the description of Ali Baba had led him to expect, and his admiration increased as he examined each thing separately. Avaricious as he was, he could have passed the whole day in feasting his eyes with the sight of so much gold ; but he reflected that he was come to take away and laden his ten mules with as much as he could collect ; he therefore took up a number of sacks, and coming to the door, his mind filled with a multitude of ideas, far removed from that which was of the most consequence, he found that he had forgotten the important words, and instead of pronouncing "Sesame," he said,

"Open, harley." He was struck with astonishment on perceiving that the door, instead of flying open, remained closed; he named various other kinds of grain; all but the right were called upon, and the door did not move.

Cassim was not prepared for an adventure of this nature; in the imminent danger in which he beheld himself, fear took entire possession of his mind; the more he endeavoured to recollect the word "*sesamé*," the more was his memory confused, and he remained as totally ignorant of it as if he had never heard the word mentioned. He threw the sacks he had collected on the ground, and paced with hasty steps backward and forward in the cave; the riches which surrounded him had no longer charms for his imagination.

But let us leave Cassim to deplore his own fate, for he does not deserve our compassion.

The robbers returned to their cave towards noon; and when they were within a short distance of it, and saw the mules belonging to Cassim laden with hampers, standing about the rock, they were a good deal surprised at such a novelty. They immediately advanced full speed, and drove away the ten mules, which Cassim had neglected to fasten, and which therefore soon took flight and dispersed in the forest, so as to get quite out of sight. The robbers did not give themselves the trouble to run after the mules, for their chief object was to discover him to whom they belonged. While some were employed in examining the exterior recesses of the rock, the captain with the others alighted, and with their sabres in their hands, went towards the door, pronounced the words, and it opened.

Cassim, who from the inside of the cave heard the noise of horses trampling on the ground, did not doubt that the robbers were arrived, and that his death was inevitable. Resolved, however, to attempt one effort to escape, and reach some place of safety, he placed himself near the door, ready to run out as soon as it should open. The word "*Sesamé*," which he had in vain endeavoured to recall to his remembrance, was scarcely pronounced, than it opened, and he rushed out with such violence, that he threw the captain on the ground. He did not, however, avoid the other thieves, who, having their sabres drawn, slew him on the spot.

The first care which occupied the robbers after this execution, was to enter the cave; they found the sacks near the door, which Cassim, after having filled them with gold, had removed there for the convenience of lading his mules; and they put them in their places again, without observing the deficiency of those which Ali Baba had previously carried away. Deliberating and consulting on this event, they could easily account for Cassim's not having been able to effect his escape: but they could not in any way imagine how he had been able to enter the cave. They conceived that he might have descended from the top of the cave, but the opening which admitted the light was so high, and the summit of the rock so inaccessible on the outside, besides that there were no traces of his having adopted this mode, that they all agreed it was beyond their conjecture. They could not suppose that he had entered by the door, unless he had been acquainted with the secret which caused it to open; but they felt quite secure that they alone were possessed of this secret, as they were ignorant of having been overheard by Ali Baba.

But as the manner in which this circumstance had happened was impentrateable, and their united riches were no longer in safety, they agreed to divide the carcass of Cassim into four quarters, and place them in the cave near the door—two quarters on one side, and two on the other—to frighten away any one who might have the boldness to hazard a similar enterprise; resolving themselves not to return to the cave for some time, until the stench from the corpse should be subsided. This determination formed, they put it in execution;

and when they had nothing further to detain them, they left their place of retreat well secured, mounted their horses, and set off to scour the country in such roads as were most frequented by caravans, which afforded them favourable opportunities of exercising their wonted dexterity in plunder.

The wife of Cassim, in the mean time, was in the greatest uneasiness, when she observed night approach, and yet her husband did not return. She went in the utmost alarm to Ali Baba, and said to him, "Brother, I believe you are not ignorant that Cassim is gone to the forest, and for what purpose; he is not yet come back, and night is already advancing; I fear that some accident may have befallen him."

Ali Baba suspected his brother's intention after the conversation he had held with him, and for this reason he had desisted from visiting the forest on that day, that he might not offend him. However, without uttering any reproaches that could have given the slightest offence, either to her or her husband, had he been still living, he replied, that she need not yet feel any uneasiness concerning him, for that Cassim most probably thought it prudent not to return to the city until the night was considerably advanced. The wife of Cassim felt satisfied with this reason, and was the more easily persuaded of its truth, as she considered how important it was that her husband should use the greatest secrecy for the accomplishment of his purpose. She returned to her house, and waited patiently till midnight: but after that hour her fears redoubled, and were attended with still greater grief, as she could not proclaim it, nor even relieve it by cries, the cause of which she saw the necessity of concealing from the neighbourhood. She then began to repent of the silly curiosity which, instigated by the most despicable envy, had induced her to endeavour to penetrate into the private affairs of her brother and sister-in-law. The night was spent in weeping, and at break of day she ran to them, and announced the cause of her early visit, less by her words than her tears.

Ali Baba did not wait for his sister's entreaties, to go and seek for Cassim. He immediately set off with his three asses, and went to the forest. As he drew near the rock, he was astonished on observing that blood had been shed near the door; and not having in his way met either his brother or the ten rascals, he conceived no favourable omen. He reached the door, and on pronouncing the words, it opened. He was struck with horror when he distinguished the body of his brother cut into four quarters: yet he did not hesitate on the course he was to pursue in rendering the last act of duty to his brother's remains, notwithstanding the small share of fraternal affection he had received from him during his life. He found materials in the cave to wrap up the body; and making two packets of the four quarters, he placed them on one of his asses, covering them with sticks, to conceal them. The other two asses he quickly loaded with sacks of gold, putting wood over them as on the preceding occasion; and having finished all he had to do, and commanded the door to close, he took the road to the city, using the precaution to wait at the entrance of the forest until night was closed, that he might return without being observed. When he got home, he left the two asses that were laden with gold, desiring his wife to take care to unload them; and having in a few words acquainted her with what had happened to Cassim, he led the other ass to his sister-in-law.

Ali Baba knocked at the door, which was opened to him by Morgiana: this Morgiana was a female slave, crafty, cunning, and fruitful in inventions to forward the success of the most difficult enterprise, in which character Ali Baba knew her well. When he had entered the court, he took off the wood and the two packages from the ass, and taking the slave aside, "Morgiana," said he, "the first thing I have to request of you is inviolable secrecy; you will soon see how necessary it is, not only to me, but to your mistress. These two

packets contain the body of your master, and we must endeavour to bury him as if he had died a natural death. Let me speak to your mistress, and be attentive to what I shall say to her."

Morgiana went to acquaint her mistress, and Ali Baba followed her. "Well, brother," inquired his sister-in-law in an impatient tone, "what news do you bring of my husband? Alas! I perceive no traces of consolation in your countenance." "Sister," replied Ali Baba, "I cannot answer you, unless you will first promise to listen to me from the beginning to the end of my story without interruption. It is of no less importance to you than to me, under the present circumstances, to preserve the greatest secrecy; it is absolutely necessary for your repose and security." "Ah!" cried the sister, without elevating her voice, "this preamble convinces me that my husband is no more; but at the same time, I feel the necessity of the secrecy you require; I must do violence to my feelings: speak, I attend."

Ali Baba then related to her all that had happened during his journey, until his arrival with the body of Cassim: "Sister," added he, "here is a new cause of affliction for you, the more distressing, as it was unexpected; although the evil is without remedy, if, nevertheless, anything can afford your consolation, I offer to join the small property God has granted me, to yours, by marrying you; I can assure you my wife will not be jealous, and you will live comfortably together. If this proposal meets your approbation, we must contrive to bury my brother as if he had died a natural death; and this is a trust which I think you may safely repose in Morgiana; and I will, on my part, contribute all in my power to assist her."

The widow of Cassim reflected that she could not do better than consent to this offer; for he possessed greater riches than she was left with, and besides, by the discovery of the treasure, might increase them considerably. She did not therefore refuse his proposal, but on the contrary, regarded it as a reasonable motive for consolation. She wiped away her tears, which had begun to flow abundantly, and suppressed those mournful cries, which women usually utter on the death of their husbands, and thereby sufficiently testified to Ali Baba that she accepted his offer.

Ali Baba left the widow of Cassim in this disposition of mind, and having strongly recommended Morgiana to acquit herself properly in the part she was to perform, he returned home with his ass.

Morgiana did not belie her character for cunning. She went out with Ali Baba, and repaired to an apothecary, who lived in the neighbourhood; she knocked at the shop-door, and when it was opened, asked for a particular kind of lozenge of great efficacy in dangerous disorders. The apothecary gave her as much as the money she offered would pay for, asking who was ill in her master's family. "Ah!" exclaimed she, with a deep sigh, "it is my worthy master, Cassim himself. No one can understand his complaint; he can neither speak nor eat."

On the following day, she again went to the same apothecary, and with tears in her eyes inquired for an essence, which it was customary only to administer when the patient was reduced to the last extremity, and when few hopes were entertained of life. "Alas!" cried she, as she received it from the hands of the apothecary, apparently in the deepest affliction, "I fear this remedy will not be of more use than the lozenges. I shall lose my good master!"

On the other hand, as Ali Baba and his wife were seen going backwards and forwards to the house of Cassim, in the course of the day, no one was surprised towards evening on hearing the piercing cries of his widow and Morgiana, which announced the death of Cassim. At a very early hour the next morning, when day began to appear, Morgiana knowing that a good old cobbler lived

near, who was one of the first to open his shop, went out in search of him. Coming up to him, she wished him a good day, and put a piece of gold into his hand.

Baba Mustapha, known to all the world by this name, was naturally of a gay turn, and had always something laughable to say. Examining the piece of money, as it was yet scarcely daylight, and seeing it was gold, "A good hansom," said he; "what's to be done? I am ready to do what I am bid." "Baba Mustapha," said Morgiana to him, "take all you want for sewing, and come directly with me; but on this condition, that you let me put a bandage over your eyes, when we have got to a certain place." At these words Baba Mustapha began to make difficulties. "Oh, oh," said he, "you want me to do something against my conscience, or my honour;" then putting another piece of gold into his hand, "God forbid," said Morgiana, "that I should require you to do anything that would stain your honour; only come with me, and fear nothing."

Baba Mustapha suffered himself to be led by the slave, who, when she had reached the place she had mentioned, bound a handkerchief over his eyes, and conducted him to the house of her deceased master; nor did she remove the bandage until he was in the chamber, where the body was deposited, each quarter in its proper place. Then taking it off, "Baba Mustapha," said she, "I have brought you here, that you might sew these pieces together. Lose no time, and when you have done I will give you another piece of gold."

When Baba Mustapha had finished his job, Morgiana bound his eyes again before he left the chamber, and having given him the third piece of money according to her promise, and earnestly recommended him to secrecy, she conducted him to the place where she had first put on the handkerchief; and having again taken it off, she left him to return to his house, following him, however, with her eyes until he was out of sight, lest he should have the curiosity to return and watch her movements.

Morgiana had heated some water to wash the body of Cassim; and Ali Baba, who entered just as she returned, washed it, perfumed it with incense, and wrapped it in the burying-clothes, with the accustomed ceremonies. The undertaker also brought the coffin, which Ali Baba had taken care to order. In order that he might not observe anything particular, Morgiana took the coffin in at the door, and having paid and sent him away, she assisted Ali Baba to put the body into it. When he had nailed down the boards which covered it, she went to the mosque to give notice that everything was ready for the funeral. The people belonging to the mosque, whose office it is to wash the bodies of the dead, offered to come and perform their usual function; but she told them that all was done and ready.

Morgiana was scarcely returned when the imam and the other ministers of the mosque arrived. Four of the neighbours took the coffin on their shoulders, and carried it to the cemetery, following the imam, who repeated prayers as he went along. Morgiana, as slave to the deceased, went next, with her head uncovered, bathed in tears, and uttering the most piteous cries from time to time, beating her breast, and tearing her hair: Ali Baba closed the procession, accompanied by some of the neighbours, who occasionally took the place of the others, to relieve them in carrying the coffin until they reached the cemetery.

As for the widow of Cassim, she remained at home to lament and weep with the women of the neighbourhood, who, according to the usual custom, repaired to her house during the ceremony of the burial and joining their cries to hers, filled the air with sounds of woe. In this manner the fatal end of Cassim was so well concealed that no one in the city had the least suspicion of the affair.

Three or four days after the interment of Cassim, Ali Baba removed the few

goods he was possessed of, together with the money he had taken from the robbers' store, which he only conveyed by night, into the house of the widow of Cassim, in order to establish himself there, and thus announce his recent marriage with his sister-in-law; and as such marriages are by no means extraordinary in our religion, no one showed any marks of surprise on the occasion.

Ali Baba had a son, who had lately ended an apprenticeship with a merchant of considerable repute, and who had always bestowed the highest commendations on his conduct; to this son he gave the shop of Cassim, with a further promise that if he continued to behave with prudence, he would ere long marry him advantageously, considering his situation in life.

But let us now leave Ali Baba to enjoy the first dawn of his good fortune, and return to the forty thieves. They came back to their retreat in the forest, when the time they had agreed to be absent had expired; but their astonishment was indescribable when they found the body of Cassim gone, and it was greatly increased on perceiving a visible diminution of their treasure. "We are discovered," said the captain, "and lost beyond recovery if we are not very careful, and take immediate measures to remedy the evil; we shall by insensible degrees lose all these riches which our ancestors, as well as ourselves, have amassed with so much danger and fatigue. All that we can at present judge of the loss we have sustained is, that the thief whom we surprised at the fortunate moment when he was going to make his escape, knew the secret of opening the door. But he was not the only one who possesses it, another must have the same knowledge. His body being removed, and our treasure diminished, are uncontestable proofs of the fact. And as we have no reason to suppose that more than two people are acquainted with the secret, having destroyed one, we must not suffer the other to escape. What say you, my brave men? Are you not of my opinion?"

This proposal of the captain was thought so reasonable and proper by the whole troop, that they all approved it, and agreed that it would be advisable to relinquish every other enterprise and occupy themselves solely with this, which they should not abandon until they had succeeded in detecting the thief.

"I expected no otherwise, from your known courage and bravery," resumed the captain; "but the first thing to be done is, that one of you who is bold, courageous, and possessed of some address, should go to the city, without arms, and in the dress of a traveller and a stranger, and employ all his art to discover if the singular death we inflicted on the culprit whom we destroyed, as he deserved, is the common topic of conversation, who he was, and where he lived. This it is absolutely necessary we should be acquainted with, that we may not do anything of which we may have to repent, by making ourselves known in a country where we have been so long forgotten, and where it is so much our interest to remain so. But in order to inspire him with ardour who shall undertake this commission, and to prevent his bringing us a false report, which might occasion our total ruin, I propose that he should submit to the penalty of death in case of failure."

Without waiting for the rest to give their opinions, one of the robbers said, "I willingly submit, and glory in exposing my life for the execution of such a commission. If I should fail in the attempt, you will at least remember that neither courage nor good-will have been deficient in my offer to serve the whole troop."

This robber, after having received the commendation of the captain and his companions, disguised himself in such a way that no one could have suspected him to be what he in reality was. He set off at night, and managed so well that he entered the city just as day was beginning to appear. He went towards the square, where he saw only one shop open, which was that of Baba Mustapha.

Baba Mustapha was seated on his stool, with his awl in his hand, ready to begin his work. The thief went up to him and wished him a good morning, and perceiving him to be advanced in years, "My good man," said he, "you rise betimes to your work; it is not possible that you can see clearly at this early hour, so old as you are; and even if it were broad day, I doubt whether your eyes are good enough to sew with."

"Whoever you are," replied Baba Mustapha, "you do not know much of me. Notwithstanding my age, I have excellent eyes; and so you would have said had you known that not long ago I sewed up a dead body in a place where there was not more light than we have now."

The robber felt great satisfaction at having on his arrival addressed himself to a man who immediately gave him, of his own accord, that intelligence which he did not doubt was the very same he was in search of. "A dead body," replied he, with a feigned astonishment, to induce the other to proceed, "why sew up a dead body? I suppose you mean that you sewed the shroud in which he was buried." "No, no," said Baba Mustapha, "I know what I say; you want me to tell you more about it, but you shall not know another syllable."

The thief wanted no further proof to be fully persuaded that he was in a good train to discover what he was in search of. He drew out a piece of gold, and putting it into Baba Mustapha's hand, he said, "I have no desire to become acquainted with your secret, although I can assure you I should not divulge it, even if you had entrusted me with it. The only thing which I entreat of you is to have the goodness to direct me, or to come with me, and show me the house, where you sewed up the dead body."

"Should I even feel myself inclined to grant your request," replied Baba Mustapha, holding the piece of money in his hand ready to return it, "I assure you that I could not do it, and this you may take my word for. And I will tell you the reason: they took me to a particular place, and there they bound my eyes, from whence I suffered myself to be led to the house; and when I had finished what I had to do, I was conducted back to the same place in the same manner. You see, therefore, how impossible it is that I should be of any service to you." "But at least," resumed the robber, "you must remember nearly the way you went after your eyes were bound; pray come with me, I will put a bandage over your eyes at that place, and we will walk together along the same streets, and follow the same turnings, which you will probably recollect to have gone over before; and, as all trouble deserves a reward, here is another piece of gold. Come, grant me this favour." Saying these words, he put another piece of money into his hand.

The two pieces of gold tempted Baba Mustapha; he looked at them in his hand some time without saying a word, consulting within himself what he should do. At length he drew his purse from his bosom, and putting them in it, "I cannot positively assure you," said he, "that I remember exactly the way they took me, but since you will have it so, come along, I will do my best to remember it."

To the great satisfaction of the robber, Baba Mustapha got up to go with him, and without shutting up his shop, where there was nothing of consequence to lose, he conducted the robber to the spot where Morgiana had put the bandage over his eyes. When they were arrived, "This is the place," said he, "where my eyes were bound, and I was turned the way you see me." The robber, who had his handkerchief ready, tied it over his eyes, and walked by his side, partly leading him and partly being conducted by him, till he stopped.

Baba Mustapha then said, "I think I did not go farther than this;" and he was in fact exactly before the house which formerly belonged to Cassim, and where Ali Baba now resided. Before he took the bandage from his eyes, the

robber quickly made a mark on the door with some chalk he had for the purpose, and when he had taken it off he asked him if he knew to whom the house belonged. Baba Mustapha replied, that he did not live in that division of the town, and therefore could not give him any information respecting it. As the robber found he could gain no further intelligence from Baba Mustapha, he thanked him for the trouble he had taken, and when he left him to return to his shop, he took the road to the forest, where he was persuaded he should be well received.

Soon after the robber and Baba Mustapha had separated, Morgiana had occasion to go out on some errand, and when she returned she observed the mark which the robber had made on the door of Ali Baba's house. She stopped to consider it. "What can this mark signify?" thought she; "has any one a spite against my master, or has it been done only for diversion? Be the motive what it may, it will be well to use precautions against the worst that may happen." She therefore took some chalk, and as several of the doors both above and below her master's were alike, she marked them in the same manner, and then went in without saying anything of what she had done either to her master or mistress.

The thief in the mean time continued on his road till he arrived at the forest, where he rejoined his companions at an early hour. He related the success of his journey, dwelling much on the good fortune that had befriended him in discovering so soon the very man who could give him the best information on the subject he went about, and which no one but he could have acquainted him with. They all listened to him with great satisfaction, and the captain, after praising his diligence, thus addressed the party: "Comrades," said he, "we have no time to lose; let us secretly arm ourselves and depart, and when we have entered the city, which, not to create suspicion, we had best do separately, let us all assemble in the great square, some on one side of it, some on the other, and I will go and find out the house with our companion who has brought us this good news, by which I shall be able to judge what method will be most advantageous."

The robbers all applauded their captain's proposal, and they were very shortly equipped for their departure. They went in small parties of two or three together; and, walking at a proper distance from each other, they entered the city without occasioning any suspicion. The captain, and he who had been there in the morning, were the last to enter it; and the latter conducted the captain to the street in which he had marked the house of Ali Baba. When they reached the first house that had been marked by Morgiana, he pointed it out, saying that was the one. But as they continued walking on without stopping, that they might not raise suspicion, the captain perceived that the next door was marked in the same manner, and on the same part, which he observed to his guide, and inquired whether this was the house or that they had passed? His guide was quite confused, and knew not what to answer; and his embarrassment increased when, on proceeding with the captain, he found that four or five doors successively had the same mark. He assured the captain, with an oath, that he had marked but one. "I cannot conceive," added he, "who can have imitated my mark with so much exactness, but I confess that I cannot now distinguish that which I had marked."

The captain, who found that his design did not succeed, returned to the great square, where he told the first of his people whom he met to acquaint the rest that they had lost their labour, and made a fruitless expedition, and that now nothing remained but to return to their place of retreat. He set the example, and they all followed in the same order they came.

When the troop had re-assembled in the forest, the captain explained to them

the reason of his having ordered them to return. The conductor was unanimously declared deserving of death, and he joined in his own condemnation, by owning that he should have been more cautious in taking his measures; he presented his head with firmness to him who advanced to sever it from his body.

As it was necessary for the safety and preservation of the whole band, that so great an injury should not pass off unrevenge, another robber, who flattered himself with hopes of better success than he who had just been punished, presented himself, and requested the preference. It was granted him. He went to the city, corrupted Baba Mustapha by the same artifice that the first had used, and he led him to the house of Ali Baba with his eyes bound.

The thief marked it with red in a place where it would be less discernible, thinking that would be a sure method of distinguishing it from those that were marked with white. But a short time after, Morgiana went out as on the preceding day, and on her return the red mark did not escape her piercing eye. She reasoned as before, and did not fail to make a similar red mark on the neighbouring doors.

The thief, when he returned to his companions in the forest, boasted of the precautions he had taken, which he declared to be infallible to distinguish the house of Ali Baba from the others. The captain and the rest thought with him, that he was sure of success. They repaired to the city in the same order, and with as much care as before, armed also in the same way, ready to execute the blow they meditated; the captain and the robber went immediately to the street where Ali Baba resided; but the same difficulty occurred as on the former occasion. The captain was irritated, and the thief in as great a consternation as he who had preceded him in the same business.

Thus was the captain obliged to return again on that day with his comrades, as little satisfied with his expedition as he had been on the preceding one. The robber, who was the author of the disappointment, underwent the punishment to which he had before voluntarily submitted himself.

The captain, seeing his troop diminished by two brave associates, feared it might still decrease if he continued to trust to others the discovery of the house where Ali Baba resided. Their example convinced him that they did not all excel in affairs that depended on the head, as in those in which strength of arms was required. He therefore undertook the business himself: he went to the city, and with the assistance of Baba Mustapha, who was ready to perform the same service for him which he had done for the other two, he found the house of Ali Baba, but not choosing to amuse himself in making marks on it, which had hitherto proved so fallacious, he examined it so thoroughly, not only by looking at it attentively, but by passing before it several times, that at last he was certain he could not mistake it.

The captain, satisfied of having obtained the object of his journey, by becoming acquainted with what he desired, returned to the forest, and when he had reached the cave where the rest of the robbers were waiting his return, "Comrades," said he, addressing them, "nothing now can prevent our taking full revenge of the injury that has been done us. I know with certainty the house of the culprit who is to experience it; and on the road I have meditated a way of making him feel it so privately, that no one shall be able to discover the place of our retreat any more than that where our treasure is deposited; for this must be our principal object in our enterprise, otherwise, instead of being serviceable, it will only prove fatal to us all. This is what I have conceived to obtain this end; and when I have explained the plan to you, if any one can propose a better expedient, let him communicate it." He then told them in what manner he intended to conduct the affair, and as they all gave their

approbation, he charged them to divide into small parties, and go into the neighbouring towns and villages, and to buy nineteen mules and thirty-eight large leather jars to carry oil, one of which must be full, and all the others empty.

In the course of two or three days the thieves had completed their purchase; and as the empty jars were rather too narrow at the mouth for the purpose he intended them, the captain had them enlarged. Then having made one of his men enter each jar, armed as he thought necessary, he closed them so as to appear full of oil, leaving, however, that part open which had been unsewed to admit air for them to breathe; and the better to carry on the deception, he rubbed the outside of the jars with oil, which he took from the full one.

Things being thus disposed, the mules were laden with the thirty-seven robbers, each concealed in a jar, and the jar that was filled with oil; when the captain, as conductor, took the road to the city at the hour that had been agreed, and arrived about an hour after sunset, as he proposed. He went straight to the house of Ali Baba, intending to knock, and request admission for the night for himself and his mules. He was, however, spared the trouble of knocking; he found Ali Baba at the door, enjoying the fresh air after supper. He stopped his mules, and addressing himself to Ali Baba, "Sir," said he, "I have brought the oil which you see from a great distance to sell it to-morrow at the market, and at this late hour I do not know where to go to pass the night; if it would not occasion you much inconvenience, do me the favour to take me in for the night; you will confer a great obligation on me."

Although Ali Baba had seen the man who now spoke to him in the forest, and even heard his voice, yet he had no idea that this was the captain of the forty robbers disguised as an oil merchant. "You are welcome," said he, and immediately made room for him and his mules to go in. At the same time, Ali Baba called a slave he had, and ordered him, when the mules were unladen, not only to put them under cover in the stable, but also to give them some hay and corn. He also took the trouble of going into the kitchen to desire Morgiana to get a supper quickly for a guest who was just arrived, and to prepare him a chamber and bed.

Ali Baba did more to receive his guest with all possible civility, observing, that after he had unladen his mules, and they were taken into the stables as he had commanded, that he was seeking for a place to pass the night in, he went to him to beg him to come into the room where he received company, saying, that he could not suffer him to think of passing the night in the court. The captain of the thieves endeavoured to excuse himself from accepting the invitation under the pretence of not giving trouble, but, in reality, that he might have an opportunity of executing what he meditated with more ease; and it was not until Ali Baba had used the most urgent persuasions that he complied with his request.

Ali Baba not only remained with his perfidious guest, who sought his life in return for his hospitality, until Morgiana had served the supper, but he conversed with him on various subjects which he thought might amuse him, and did not leave him till he had finished the repast he had provided. He then said, "You are at liberty to do as you please; you have only to ask for whatever you may want, and everything I have is at your service."

The captain of the robbers got up at the same time with Ali Baba and accompanied him to the door, and while the latter went into the kitchen to speak to Morgiana, he went into the court, with the pretext of going to the stable to see after his mules.

Ali Baba having again enjoined Morgiana to be attentive to his guest, and to observe that he wanted nothing, added, "I give you notice that to-morrow

before daybreak I shall go to the bath. Take care that my bathing-linen is ready, and give it to Abdalla (this was the name of his slave), and make me some good broth to take when I return." After giving these orders he went to bed.

The captain of the robbers, in the mean time, on leaving the stable, went to give his people the necessary orders for what they were to do. Beginning from the first jar, and going through the whole number, he said to each, "When I shall throw some pebbles from the chamber where I am to be lodged to-night, do not fail to rip open the jar from top to bottom with the knife you are furnished with, and to come out; I shall be with you immediately after." The knife he spoke of was pointed and sharpened for the purpose. This being done he returned, and when he got to the kitchen-door, Morgiana took a light and conducted him to the chamber she had prepared for him, and there left him, first asking if he were in want of anything more. Not to create any suspicion, he put out the light a short time after, and lay down in his clothes, to be ready to rise as soon as he had taken his first sleep.

Morgiana did not forget Ali Baba's orders; she prepared his linen for the bath and gave it Abdalla, who was not yet gone to bed; put the pot on the fire to make the broth, but while she was skimming it the lamp went out. There was no more oil in the house, and she had not any candle. She knew not what to do. She wanted a light to see to skim the pot, and mentioned her disaster to Abdalla. "Why are you so much disturbed at it?" said he; "go and take some oil out of one of the jars in the court."

Morgiana thanked Abdalla for the hint, and while he retired to bed in the next room to Ali Baba that he might be ready to go with him to the bath, she took the oil-can and went into the court. As she drew near to the first jar that presented itself, the thief who was concealed within, said, in a low voice, "Is it time?"

Although he had spoken softly, Morgiana was nevertheless struck with the sound, which she heard the more distinctly as the captain, when he had unladed his mules, had opened all the jars, and this among the rest, to give a little air to his men, who, though not absolutely deprived of breathing-room, were nevertheless in an uneasy situation.

Any other slave except Morgiana, in the first moment of surprise at finding a man in the jar instead of some oil, as she expected, would have made a great uproar, which might have created irremediable misfortunes. But Morgiana was superior to those usually in her station; she was instantly aware of the importance of secrecy in the affair, and the extreme danger in which Ali Baba and his family were as well as herself, and also the urgent necessity of devising a speedy remedy that should be executed with privacy. Her quick imagination soon conceived the means. She collected her thoughts, and without showing any emotion, she assumed the manner of the captain, and answered, "Not yet, but presently." She approached the next jar, and the same question was asked her; she went on to them all in succession, making the same answer to the same question, till she came to the last, which was full of oil.

Morgiana, by this means, discovered that her master, who supposed he was giving a night's lodging to an oil-merchant only, had afforded shelter to thirty-eight robbers, including the pretended merchant their captain. She quickly filled her oil-can from the last jar, and returned into the kitchen; and after having put some oil in her lamp and lighted it, she took a large kettle, and went again into the court to fill it with oil from the jar. This done, she brought it back again, put it over the fire, and made a great blaze under it with a quantity of wood; for the sooner the oil boiled, the sooner her plan, which was for the welfare of the whole family, would be executed, and it required the utmost

despatch. At length the oil boiled. She took the kettle and poured into each jar, from the first to the last, sufficient boiling oil to scald the robbers and deprive them of life, which she effected to her wishes.

This act, so worthy of the intrepidity of Morgiana, being performed without noise or disturbance to any one, exactly as she had conceived it, she returned to the kitchen with the empty kettle, and shut the door. She put out the large fire she had made up for this purpose, and only left enough to finish boiling the broth for Ali Baba. She then blew out the lamp and remained perfectly silent, determined not to go to bed until she had observed, as much as the obscurity of night would allow her to distinguish, what would ensue, from a window of the kitchen which overlooked the court.

Morgiana had scarcely waited a quarter of an hour when the captain of the robbers awoke. He got up, and opening the window looked out; all was dark, and a profound silence reigned; he gave the signal by throwing the pebbles, many of which fell on the jars, as the sound plainly proved. He listened, but heard nothing that could lead him to suppose his men obeyed the summons. He became uneasy at this delay, and threw some pebbles down a second, and even a third time. They all struck the jars, yet nothing appeared to indicate that they were attended to; he was at a loss to account for this mystery. He descended into the court in the utmost alarm, with as little noise as possible; and approaching the first jar, as he was going to ask if the robber contained in it, and whom he supposed still living, was asleep, he smelt a strong scent of hot and burning oil issuing from the jar, by which he suspected his enterprise against Ali Baba to destroy him, pillage his house, and carry off, if possible, all the money which he had taken from him and the community, had failed. He proceeded to the next jar, and to all in succession, and discovered that all his men had shared the same fate; and by the diminution of the oil in that which he had brought full, he guessed the means that had been used to deprive him of the assistance he expected. Mortified at having thus missed his aim, he jumped over the garden-gate which led out of the court, and going from one garden to another by getting over the walls, he made his escape.

When Morgiana perceived that all was still and silent, and that the captain of the thieves did not return, she concluded he had decamped, as he did, instead of attempting to escape by the house-door, which was fastened with double bolts. Fully satisfied and overjoyed at having so well succeeded in securing the safety of the whole family, she at length retired to bed and soon fell asleep.

Ali Baba went out before daybreak, and repaired to the bath, followed by his slave, totally ignorant of the surprising event which had taken place in his house during his sleep, for Morgiana had not thought it necessary to wake him, particularly as she had no time to lose, while she was engaged in her perilous enterprise, and it was useless to interrupt his repose after she had averted the danger.

When he returned from the bath, the sun being risen, Ali Baba was surprised to see the jars of oil still in their places, and that the merchant had not taken them to the market with his mules; he inquired the reason of Morgiana, who let him in, and who had left everything in its original state, in order to show him the deceit which had been practised on him, and to convince him more sensibly of the effort she had made for his preservation.

"My good master," said Morgiana to Ali Baba's question, "may God preserve you and all your family. You will be better informed of what you wish to know when you shall have seen what I am going to show you, if you will take the trouble to come with me." Ali Baba followed Morgiana, and when

she had shut the door, she took him to the first jar and bid him look in and see if it contained oil. He did as she desired: and perceiving a man in the jar, he hastily drew back and uttered a cry of surprise. "Do not be afraid," said she, "the man you see there will not do you any harm; he has attempted it, but he will never hurt either you or any one else again, for he is now a lifeless corpse." "Morgiana!" exclaimed Ali Baba, "what does all this mean? Do explain this mystery." "I will explain it," replied Morgiana; "but moderate your astonishment, and do not awaken the curiosity of your neighbours to learn what it is of the utmost importance that you should keep secret and concealed. Look first at all the other jars."

Ali Baba examined all the rest of the jars, one after the other, from the first till he came to the last, which contained the oil, and he remarked that its contents were considerably diminished. This operation being completed, he remained motionless with astonishment, sometimes casting his eyes on Morgiana, then looking at the jars, yet without speaking a word, so great was his surprise. At length, as if speech was suddenly restored to him, he said, "And what is become of the merchant?"

"The merchant," replied Morgiana, "is just as much a merchant as I am. I can tell you who he is, and what is become of him. But you will hear the whole history more conveniently in your own chamber, for it is now time, for the sake of your health, that you should take your broth after coming out of the bath." Whilst Ali Baba went into his room, Morgiana returned to the kitchen to get the broth; and when she brought it, before Ali Baba would take it, he said, "Begin to relate this wonderful history, and satisfy the extreme impatience I feel to know all its circumstances."

Morgiana, in obedience to Ali Baba's request, detailed the events of the preceding night, adding, as she concluded: "I am convinced that this is the conclusion of a scheme of which I observed the beginning two or three days ago, but which I did not think it necessary to trouble you with an account of." She then described the marks made upon the door, and the manner in which she had rendered them useless, adding: "If you connect this with what has happened, you will find that the whole is a machination contrived by the thieves of the forest, whose troop, I know not how, seems to be diminished by two. But be that as it may, it is now reduced to three at most. This proves that they are determined on your death, and you will do right to be on your guard against them, so long as you are certain that even one remains. On my part, I will do all in my power towards your preservation, which indeed I consider my duty."

When Morgiana ceased speaking, Ali Baba, penetrated with gratitude for the great obligation he owed her, replied, "I will recompense you as you deserve, before I die. I owe my life to you, and to give you an immediate proof of my feelings on the occasion, I from this moment give you your liberty, and will soon reward you in a more ample manner. I am persuaded, as well as yourself, that the forty robbers laid this snare for me. God, through your means, has delivered me from the danger; I hope he will continue to protect me from their malice, and that by averting destruction from my head, he will make it recoil with greater certainty on them, and thus deliver the world from so dangerous and cursed a persecution. What we have now to do, is to use the utmost despatch in burying the bodies of this pest of the human race, yet with so much secrecy that no one shall entertain the slightest suspicion of their fate; and for this purpose I will instantly go to work with Abdalla."

Ali Baba's garden was of a considerable length, and terminated by some large trees. He went without delay with his slave to dig a grave under these trees, of sufficient length and breadth to contain the bodies he had to inter.

The ground was soft, and easy to remove, so they were not long in completing their work. They took the bodies out of the jars, and set apart the arms with which the robbers had furnished themselves. They then carried the bodies to the bottom of the garden, and placed them in the grave, and after having covered them with the earth they had previously removed, they spread about what remained, to make the surface of the ground appear even as it was before. Ali Baba carefully concealed the oil jars and the arms; and as for the mules, of which he was not then in want, he sent them to the market at different times, where he disposed of them by means of his slave.

Whilst Ali Baba was taking these precautions to prevent its being publicly known by what means he had become rich in so short a space of time, the captain of the forty thieves had returned to the forest, mortified beyond measure at having met with such bad success. On reaching the cavern, the dismal solitude of this gloomy habitation appeared to him insupportable. "Brave companions," cried he, "partners of my labours and my pains, where are you? What can I accomplish without your assistance? Did I select and assemble you only to see you perish all at one moment, by a destiny so fatal and so unworthy of your courage? My regret for your loss would not have been so poignant had you died sabre in hand like valiant men. When shall I be able to collect together another troop of intrepid men like you; and even should I wish it, how could I undertake it, without exposing so much specie in gold and silver to the mercy of him who hath already enriched himself with a part of this treasure? I cannot, I must not, think of such an enterprise until I have put a period to his existence. What I have not been able to accomplish with such powerful assistance, I will perform alone; and when I shall have secured this immense property from being exposed to pillage, I will then endeavour to provide a master and successors for it after my decease, that it may be not only preserved, but augmented to the latest posterity." Having formed this resolution, he felt no embarrassment as to the execution of it, and filled with the most pleasing hopes, he fell asleep, and passed the rest of the night very quietly.

The next morning the captain of the robbers awoke at an early hour, as he had proposed, put on a dress suitable to his design, and repaired to the city, where he took a lodging in a khan. As he supposed that what had happened in the house of Ali Baba might have become generally known, he asked the host if there were any news stirring; in reply to which the host talked on a variety of subjects, but none relating to what he wished to be informed of. By this he concluded that the reason why Ali Baba kept the transaction so profoundly secret, was that he did not wish it to be divulged that he had access to so immense a treasure; and also that he was apprehensive of his life being in danger on this account. This idea excited him to neglect nothing that could hasten his destruction, which he intended to accomplish by means as secret as Ali Baba had adopted towards the robbers.

The captain provided himself with a horse, which he made use of to convey to his lodging several kinds of rich stuffs and fine linens, bringing them from the forest at various times, with all the necessary precautions for keeping the place from whence he brought them still concealed. In order to dispose of this merchandise, when he had collected together as much as he thought proper, he sought for a shop. Having found one that would suit him, he hired it of the proprietor, furnished it with goods, and established himself in it. The shop that was exactly opposite to his was that which had belonged to Cassim and was now occupied by the son of Ali Baba.

The captain of the robbers, who had assumed the name of Cogia Houssain, did not fail in the proper civilities to the merchants his neighbours, which,

as being lately come, was the usual custom. But the son of Ali Baba being young and of a pleasing address, and the captain having more frequent occasion to converse with him than with the others, he very soon formed an intimacy with him. This acquaintance he soon resolved to cultivate with greater assiduity and care, when three or four days after he was settled in his shop, he recognised Ali Baba, who came to see his son, as he was in the constant habit of doing; and on inquiring of the son after his departure, discovered that he was his father. He now increased his attentions and caresses to him; he made him several little presents, and also often invited him to his table, where he regaled him very handsomely.

The son of Ali Baba did not choose to receive so many obligations from Cogia Houssain without returning them. But his lodging was small, and he had no convenience for regaling him as he wished. He mentioned his intention to his father; adding that it was not proper that he should delay any longer to return the favours he had received from Cogia Houssain.

Ali Baba very willingly took the charge of the entertainment. "My son," said he, "to-morrow is Friday; and as it is a day on which the most considerable merchants, such as Cogia Houssain and yourself, keep their shops shut, invite him to take a walk with you after dinner, and as you return, direct your course so that you may pass my house, and then beg him to come in. It will be better to manage thus, than to invite him in a formal way. I will give orders to Morgiana to prepare a supper, and have it ready by the time you come."

On the Friday, Cogia Houssain and the son of Ali Baba met in the afternoon to take their walk together, as had been agreed. On their return, the son of Ali Baba, as if by accident, led Cogia Houssain through the street in which his father lived; and when they had reached the house, he stopped him, and knocked at the door. "This," said he, "is my father's house; he has desired me to procure him the honour of your acquaintance; after what I told him of your friendship for me. I entreat you to add this favour to the many I have received from you."

Although Cogia Houssain had now reached the object of his desires, which was to gain admission into the house of Ali Baba, and to attempt his life without hazarding his own or creating any suspicion, yet he now endeavoured to excuse himself, and pretended to take leave of the son: but as the slave of Ali Baba opened the door at that moment, the son, in an obliging manner, took him by the hand, and going in first, drew him forward, and as it were, forced him to comply, though seemingly against his wishes.

Ali Baba received Cogia Houssain in a friendly manner, and gave him as hearty a welcome as he could desire. He thanked him for his kindness to his son. "The obligation he is under to you," added he, "as well as myself, is so much the more considerable, as he is a young man who has not yet been much in the world, and you have the goodness to condescend to form his manners."

Cogia Houssain did not spare his compliments in return for Ali Baba's, assuring him, that although his son had not acquired the experience of older men, yet that he was possessed of an amount of good sense, which was of more service to him than experience was to many others.

After a short conversation on topics of an indifferent nature, Cogia Houssain was going to take his leave, but Ali Baba stopped him: "Where are you going, sir?" said he, "I entreat you to do me the honour of staying to sup with me. The humble meal you will partake of is little worthy of the honour you will confer on it; but such as it is, I hope you will accept the intention with as much good will as I offer it."

"Sir," replied Cogia Houssain, "I am fully persuaded of your kindness; and although I beg you to excuse me, if I take my leave without accepting your obliging invitation, yet I entreat you to believe that I refuse you, not from incivility or contempt, but because I have a very strong reason, and which I am sure you would approve, were it known to you."

"What might this reason be, sir," resumed Ali Baba, "might I take the liberty of asking you?" "I do not refuse to tell it," said Cogia Houssain. "It is this; I never eat of any dish that has salt in it: judge then, of the figure I should make at your table." "If this be your only reason," replied Ali Baba, "it need not deprive me of the honour of your company at supper, unless you have absolutely determined otherwise. In the first place, the bread which is eaten in my house does not contain any salt; and as for the meat and other dishes, I promise you there shall be none in those which are served before you; I will now go to give orders to that effect; you will therefore do me the favour to remain, and I will be with you in an instant."

Ali Baba went into the kitchen, and desired Morgiana not to put any salt to the meat she was going to serve for supper, and also to prepare two or three dishes of those that he had ordered without any salt.

Morgiana, who was just going to serve the supper, could not avoid expressing some discontent at this new order, and making some inquiries of Ali Baba: "Who," said she, "is this difficult man, that cannot eat salt? Your supper will be good for nothing if I delay it any later." "Do not be angry," replied Ali Baba; "he is a good man; do what I desire you."

Morgiana obeyed, though much against her will; and she felt some curiosity to see this man, who did not eat salt. When she had finished, and Abdalla had prepared the table, she assisted him in carrying the dishes. On looking at Cogia Houssain, she instantly recollected him to be the captain of the robbers, notwithstanding his disguise; and examining him with great attention, she perceived that he had a dagger concealed under his dress. "I am no longer surprised," said she to herself, "that this villain will not eat salt with my master; he is his bitterest enemy, and means to murder him; but I will still prevent him from accomplishing his purpose."

When Morgiana had finished serving the dishes, and assisting Abdalla, she availed herself of the time while they were at supper, and made the necessary preparations for the execution of an enterprise of the boldest and most intrepid nature; and she had just completed them, when Abdalla came to acquaint her that it was time to serve the fruit. She carried it in; and when Abdalla had taken away the supper, she placed it on the table. She then put a small table near Ali Baba, with the wine and three cups, and left the room with Abdalla, as if to go to supper together, and leave Ali Baba according to custom at liberty to converse and entertain himself with his guest and to push the wine about.

Cogia Houssain, or rather the captain of the forty thieves, now thought that a favourable opportunity for revenging himself on Ali Baba, by taking his life, was arrived. "I will make them both intoxicated," thought he, "and then the son, against whom I bear no malice, will not prevent my plunging my dagger into the heart of his father, and I shall escape by way of the garden, as I did before, while the cook and the slave are at their supper or perhaps asleep in the kitchen."

Instead, however, of going to supper, Morgiana, who had penetrated into the views of the pretended Cogia Houssain, did not allow him time to put his wicked intentions in execution. She dressed herself like a dancer, put on a head-dress suitable to that character, and wore a girdle round her waist of silver gilt, to which she fastened a dagger, made of the same metal. Her face

was covered by a very handsome mask. When she had thus disguised herself, she said to Abdalla, "Take your tabor, and let us go and entertain our master's guest, who is the friend of his son, as we do sometimes by our performances."

Abdalla took his tabor and began to play, as he walked before Morgiana, and entered the room; Morgiana following him, made a low curtsy with a deliberate air to attract notice, as if to request permission to do what she could to amuse the company. Abdalla perceiving that Ali Baba was going to speak, ceased striking his tabor. "Come in, Morgiana," cried Ali Baba; "Cogia Houssain will judge of your skill, and tell us his opinion. Do not however suppose, sir," continued he, addressing Cogia Houssain, "that I have been at any expense to procure you this entertainment. We have it all within ourselves, and it is only my slave and my cook and housekeeper whom you see. I hope you will find it amusing."

Cogia Houssain did not expect Ali Baba to add this entertainment to the supper he had given him. This made him apprehensive that he should not be able to avail himself of the opportunity he thought now presented itself. But should that be the case, he still consoled himself with the hopes of meeting with another, if he continued the acquaintance with Ali Baba and his son. Therefore, although he would gladly have dispensed with this addition to the entertainment, he nevertheless pretended to be obliged to him, and added, that whatever gave Ali Baba pleasure, could not fail of being agreeable to him.

When Abdalla perceived that Ali Baba and Cogia Houssain had ceased speaking, he again began to play on his tabor, singing to it an air for Morgiana to dance to; she, who was equal to any one who practised dancing for their profession, performed her part so admirably, that every spectator who had seen her must have been delighted, independently of the present company, of which perhaps Cogia Houssain was the least attentive to her excellence.

After having performed several dances, with equal grace and agility, she at length drew out the dagger, and dancing with it in her hand, she surpassed all she had yet done, by her light movements and high leaps, and by the wonderful efforts which she interspersed in the figure; sometimes presenting the dagger as if to strike, and at others holding it to her own bosom, pretending to stab herself.

At length, as if out of breath, she took the tabor from Abdalla with her left hand, and holding the dagger in her right, she presented the tabor with the hollow part upwards to Ali Baba, in imitation of the dancers by profession, who make use of this practice, to excite the liberality of the spectators.

Ali Baba threw a piece of gold into the tabor. Morgiana then presented it to his son, who followed his father's example. Cogia Houssain, who saw that she was advancing towards him for the same purpose, had already taken his purse from his bosom to contribute his present, and was putting his hand in it, when Morgiana, with a courage and fortitude equal to the resolution she had taken, plunged the dagger into his heart so deep, that the life-blood streamed from the wound, when she withdrew it.

Ali Baba and his son, terrified at this action, uttered a loud cry: "Wretch!" exclaimed Ali Baba, "what hast thou done? Thou hast ruined me and my family for ever."

"What I have done," replied Morgiana, "is not for your ruin, but for your preservation." Then opening Cogia Houssain's robe to show Ali Baba the poniard which was concealed under it, "See," continued she, "the cruel enemy you had to deal with; examine his countenance attentively, and you will recognise the pretended oil-merchant and the captain of the forty robbers. Do you not recollect that he refused to eat salt with you? Can you require a stronger

proof of his malicious intentions? Before I even saw him, from the moment you told me of this peculiarity in your guest, I suspected his design, and you are now convinced that my suspicions were not ill-founded."

Ali Baba, who was now aware of the fresh obligation he owed to Morgiana for having thus preserved his life a second time, embraced her, and said, "Morgiana, I give you your liberty, and at the same time promised to give you stronger proofs of my gratitude at some future period. This period is now arrived, and I present you to my son as his wife." Then addressing his son, "I believe you," said he, "to be so dutiful a son, that you will not take it amiss, if I should bestow Morgiana upon you, without previously consulting your inclinations. Your obligation to her is not less than mine. You plainly see, that Cogia Houssain only sought your acquaintance, in order to insure success in his diabolical treachery: and had he sacrificed me to his vengeance, you cannot suppose that you would have been spared. You must further consider, that in marrying Morgiana, you connect yourself with the preserver of my family, and the support of yours to the end of your days."

His son, far from showing any symptoms of discontent, said, that he willingly consented to the marriage, not only because he was desirous of proving his ready obedience to his father's wishes, but also because his inclinations strongly urged him to the union. They then began to prepare for the interment of the captain of the robbers, by the side of his former companions; and this was performed with such secrecy, that the circumstance was not known till the expiration of many years, when no one was any longer interested in keeping this memorable history concealed.

A few days after, Ali Baba had the nuptials of his son and Morgiana celebrated with great solemnity, and he had the satisfaction of observing that the friends and neighbours he had invited, who did not know the true reason of the marriage, but were not unacquainted with the good qualities of Morgiana, admired his generosity and discrimination.

After the marriage was solemnised, Ali Baba, who had not revisited the cave since he had brought away the body of his brother Cassim, on one of the three asses, together with the gold with which the other two were laden, lest he should meet with any of the thieves, and be surprised by them, still refrained from going even after the death of the thirty-seven robbers and their captain, as he was ignorant of the fate of the other two, and supposed them to be still alive.

At the expiration of a year, however, finding that no scheme had been attempted to disturb his quiet, he had the curiosity to make a journey to the cave, taking the necessary precaution for his safety. He mounted his horse, and when he had nearly reached the cave, seeing no traces of either men or horses, he conceived it to be a favourable omen; he dismounted, and fastening his horse, that he should not go astray, he went up to the door, and repeated the words, "Open, *sesamé*," which he had not forgotten. The door opened, and he entered. The state in which everything appeared in the cave, led him to judge that no one had been in it from the time that the pretended Cogia Houssain had opened his shop in the city, and he therefore concluded that the whole troop of robbers was exterminated, and that he was the only person in the whole world who was acquainted with the secret for entering the cave; and consequently, that the immense treasure it contained was entirely at his disposal. He had provided himself with a portmanteau, and he filled it with as much gold as his horse could carry, after which he returned to the city.

From that time Ali Baba and his son, whom he took to the cave and taught the secret to enter it, and after them their posterity, who were also intrusted with the important secret, enjoying their riches with moderation, lived in great

splendour, and were honoured with the most dignified situations in the city.

Having finished the relation of this story, Scheherazadè perceived that the day was not yet commenced, and therefore began to recount to the sultana this, which follows.

THE HISTORY OF ALI COGIA, A MERCHANT OF BAGDAD.

IN the reign of the caliph Haroun Alraschid, there lived at Bagdad a merchant named Ali Cogia, who was neither of the richest nor yet of the lowest order, and who dwelt in his paternal house, without either wife or children. He lived contented with what his business produced, and was as free in his actions as in his will. During this period, he had for three successive nights a dream, in which an old man appeared to him with a venerable aspect, but a severe countenance, who reprimanded him for not having yet performed a pilgrimage to Mecca.

This dream very much troubled Ali Cogia, and occasioned him great embarrassment. As a good Mussulman, he was aware of the necessity of performing this pilgrimage, but as he was encumbered with a house and furniture, and a shop, he had always considered these as excuses sufficiently weighty to dispense with the obligation; and he endeavoured to compensate for the neglect by charitable and meritorious actions. But since he had these dreams, his conscience so much disturbed him, and he was so fearful lest some misfortune should happen in consequence, that he resolved no longer to defer this act of duty.

To enable himself to perform this in the following year, Ali Cogia began to sell his furniture; he then disposed of his shop, together with the greatest part of the merchandise with which it was stocked, reserving only such as might be saleable at Mecca: and he found a tenant for his house, to whom he let it on lease.

Having thus arranged everything, he was ready to set out at the time that the caravan for Mecca was to take its departure. The only thing which remained to be done, was to find some secure place in which he could leave the sum of a thousand pieces of gold, which remained of the money he had set apart for his pilgrimage, and which would have encumbered him during the journey.

Ali Cogia made choice of a jar of a proper size, and put the thousand pieces of gold into it, and then filled it up with olives. After having closed the jar tightly, he took it to a merchant, who was his friend. "Brother," said he to him, "you are not unacquainted with my intention of setting out on a pilgrimage to Mecca with the caravan, which goes in a few days; I beg the favour of you to take charge of this jar of olives till my return." The merchant instantly replied, "Here, this is the key of my warehouse, take the jar there yourself, and place it where you think fit; I promise you that you shall find it in the same place when you come for it again."

The day for the departure of the caravan from Bagdad being arrived, Ali Cogia joined it with a camel laden with the merchandise he had made choice of, which also served him as a sort of saddle to ride on, and he arrived in perfect safety at Mecca. He, together with the other pilgrims, visited the temple; that edifice, so celebrated and so frequented every year by all the Mussulman nations, who repair thither from all parts of the globe, to observe the religious ceremonies which are required of them. When he had acquitted himself of

the duties of his pilgrimage, he exposed the merchandise he had brought with him for sale.

Two merchants, who were passing that way, and saw the goods of Ali Cogia, found them so beautiful, that they stopped to look at them, although they did not want to purchase them. When they had satisfied their curiosity, one said to the other as he was walking away, "If this merchant knew the profit he could make of his goods at Cairo, he would take them there in preference to selling them here, where they are not of so much value."

This speech did not escape Ali Cogia; and as he had often heard of the beauties of Egypt, he instantly resolved to avail himself of the opportunity, and to travel to that country. Having therefore packed up his bales, instead of returning to Bagdad, he took the road to Egypt, and joined the caravan that was going to Cairo. When he arrived there, he had no reason to repent of his journey; he indeed found it so much to his advantage, that in a few days he had disposed of all his merchandise with much greater profit than he could possibly have expected. He then purchased other goods, intending to go to Damascus, and whilst he was waiting for the convenience of a caravan, which was to go in six weeks, he not only visited everything that was worthy of his curiosity in Cairo, but also went to view the pyramids, extended his journey to some distance up the Nile, and inspected the most celebrated cities that are situated on its banks.

In his way to Damascus, as the caravan was to pass through Jerusalem, Ali Cogia took the opportunity of visiting the temple, which is considered by all Mussulmen as the most sacred after that of Mecca, and from which the place itself has obtained the epithet of the Holy City. Ali Cogia found the city of Damascus so delicious a spot, from the abundance of its streams, its meadows, and enchanting gardens, that everything he had read of its delights, in different accounts of the place, appeared to be far below the truth, and he was tempted to prolong his residence there for a considerable time. As, however, he did not forget that he had to return to Bagdad, he at length took his departure and went to Aleppo, where he also passed some time, and from thence, after having crossed the Euphrates, he took the road to Moussoul, intending to shorten his journey by going down the Tigris.

But when Ali Cogia had reached Moussoul, the Persian merchants, with whom he had travelled from Aleppo, and had formed an intimacy, gained so great an ascendancy over his mind by their obliging manners and agreeable conversation, that they had no difficulty in persuading him to accompany them to Schiraz, from whence it would be easy for him to return to Bagdad, and with considerable profit. They took him through the cities of Sultania, Rei, Coam, Caschan, Ispahan, and then to Schiraz, from whence he had the further complaisance to go with them to India, and then return again to Schiraz.

In this way, reckoning also the time Ali Cogia resided in each city, it was now nearly seven years since he had quitted Bagdad, and he determined to return; till this period, the friend to whom he had intrusted the jar of olives before he left that city, had never thought more either of him or his jar. At the very time that Ali Cogia was on his return with a caravan from Schiraz, one evening as his friend the merchant was at supper with his family, the conversation by accident turned upon olives, and his wife expressed a desire of eating some, adding, that it was a long time since any had been produced in her house.

"Now you speak of olives," said the merchant, "you remind me that Ali Cogia, when he went to Mecca seven years since, left me a jar of them, which he himself placed in my warehouse, that he might find them there on his

return. But I know not what is become of Ali Cogia. Some one, it is true, on the return of the caravan, told me that he was gone into Egypt. He must have died there, as he has never returned in the course of so many years; we may surely eat the olives if they are still good. Give me a dish and a light, and I will go and get some, that we may taste them."

"In the name of God," replied the wife, "do not, my dear husband, commit so disgraceful an action; you well know, that nothing is so sacred as a trust of this kind. You say that it is seven years since Ali Cogia went to Mecca, and he has never returned; but you were informed he was gone into Egypt, and how can you ascertain that he is not gone still further? It is enough that you have received no intelligence of his death; he may return to-morrow, or the day after to-morrow. Consider how infamous it would be for you, as well as your family, if he were to return, and you could not restore the jar into his hands in the same state as when he intrusted it to your care. For my part, I declare, that I neither wish for any of these olives, nor will eat any of them. What I said was merely by way of conversation. Besides, do you suppose, that, after so long a time, the olives can be good? They must be putrid and spoiled. And if Ali Cogia returns, as I have a sort of foreboding that he will, and he perceives that you have opened the jar, what opinion will he form of your friendship and integrity? I conjure you to abandon your design."

This good woman thus protracted her arguments, only because she saw, by her husband's countenance, that he was bent on his design. In fact, he paid no attention to this good advice, but got up, and taking a light and a dish, he went to his warehouse. "Remember at least," said the wife, "that I have no share in what you are going to do; so do not attribute any fault to me, if you have hereafter to repent of the action."

The merchant still turned a deaf ear to all she said, and persisted in his purpose. When he got into the warehouse, he opened the jar, and found the olives all spoiled; but to be convinced whether those that were under were as bad as the upper ones, he poured some out into the dish, and as he shook the jar to make them fall out the easier, some pieces of gold fell out also. At the sight of this money the merchant, who was naturally of a sordid and avaricious disposition, looked into the jar, and perceived that he had emptied almost all the olives into the dish, and that what remained was money in pieces of gold. He put the olives again into the jar, and covering it, left the warehouse.

"You spoke the truth, wife," said he, when he returned. "The olives are all spoiled, and I have stopped up the jar again, so that if Ali Cogia ever comes back, he will not discover that I have touched it." "You would have done better to take my advice," returned the wife, "not to have meddled with it. God grant that no evil may come of it." The merchant paid as little attention to these last words of his wife as he had done to her former remonstrance. He passed almost the whole night in devising means to take possession of Ali Cogia's money in such a way that he might enjoy it in security, should he ever return and claim the jar. The next morning, very early, he went out to buy some olives of that year's growth. He threw away those which had been in Ali Cogia's jar, and taking out the gold, he put it in a place of safety; then filling the jar with the fresh olives he had just bought, he put on the same cover, and placed it in the same spot where Ali Cogia had left it.

About a month after the merchant had committed this treacherous act, Ali Cogia arrived at Bagdad, after his long absence from that city. As he had let his house before his departure, he alighted at a khan, where he took a lodging until he had informed his tenant of his return, that he might procure himself another residence.

The next day Ali Cogia went to see his friend the merchant, who received him with open arms, testifying the utmost joy at seeing him again, after an absence of so many years, which he said almost made him despair of ever beholding him any more.

After the usual compliments had been exchanged on their meeting, Ali Cogia begged the merchant to return him the jar of olives which he had left in his care, at the same time apologizing for the liberty he had taken in having troubled him. "My dear friend," replied the merchant, "do not think of making excuses; your jar has been no encumbrance to me, and I should have done the same with you had I been situated as you were. Here is the key of my warehouse, go and take it; you will find it where you put it yourself."

Ali Cogia went to the warehouse and took out the jar, and having given the key to the merchant, he thanked him for the favour he had done him, and returned to the khan, where he lodged. He opened the jar, and thrusting his hand to the depth where he supposed the thousand pieces of gold which he had concealed there, might be, he was extremely surprised at not feeling them. He thought he must be deceived, and to unravel the mystery as soon as possible, and relieve his doubts, he took some of the dishes and other utensils of his travelling kitchen, and emptied out all the olives, without finding one single piece of money. He was motionless with astonishment; and raising his hands and eyes towards heaven, "Is it possible," he at length exclaimed, "that a man whom I considered as my friend, could be capable of so flagrant a breach of trust!"

Ali Cogia, exceedingly alarmed at the idea of having sustained so considerable a loss, returned to the merchant. "My good friend," said he, "do not be surprised that I should return to you so quickly: I confess that I knew the jar of olives which I just now took out of your warehouse to be mine; but I had put a thousand pieces of gold in it with the olives, and these I cannot find; perhaps you have wanted them in your trade, and have made use of them. If that be the case, they are much at your service; I only beg of you to relieve my fears, and give me some acknowledgment for them; after this you will return them to me, whenever it may be most convenient to you."

The merchant, who expected Ali Cogia to return to him, had prepared an answer. "My friend," replied he, "when you brought me the jar of olives, did I touch it? Did I not give you the key of my ware-room? Did you not deposit it there yourself? and did you not find it in the same place where you put it, exactly in the same state, and covered in the same manner? If you put money in it, there you must find it. You told me it contained olives, and I believed you. This is all I know about the matter; you may believe me or not as you please, but I assure you I have not touched it."

Ali Cogia used the gentlest means to enable the merchant to justify himself. "I love peaceable measures," said he, "and I should be sorry to proceed to extremities, which would not be very creditable to you in the eyes of the world, and which I should not have recourse to without the utmost reluctance. Consider that merchants, such as we are, should abandon all private interest to preserve their reputation. Once more I tell you, that I should be sorry if your obstinacy compels me to apply to the forms allowed by justice, for I have always preferred losing something of my right to having recourse to those means."

"Ali Cogia," resumed the merchant, "you confess that you have deposited a jar of olives with me, that you took possession of it again, and that you carried it away; and now you come to demand of me a thousand pieces of gold. Did you tell me that they were contained in the jar? I am even ignorant

that there were olives in it; you did not show them to me! I am surprised that you did not require pearls and diamonds rather than money. Take my advice: go home, and do not assemble a crowd about my door."

Some people had already stopped before his shop; and these last words, pronounced in a tone of voice which denoted that he was trespassing the bounds of moderation, not only collected a larger number, but made the neighbouring merchants come out of their shops to inquire the reason of the dispute between him and Ali Cogia, and to try to reconcile them. When Ali Cogia had explained to them the subject, the most earnest in the cause asked the merchant what reply he had to make.

The merchant owned that he had kept the jar belonging to Ali Cogia in his warehouse, but he denied having touched it, and made oath, that he only knew that it contained olives because Ali Cogia had told him so, and that he considered them all as witnesses of the insulting affront which had been offered to him in his own house.

"You have drawn the affront on yourself," said Ali Cogia, taking him by the arm; "but since you behave so wickedly, I cite you by the law of God. Let us see if you will have the face to say the same before the cadi."

At this summons, which every true Mussulman must obey, unless he rebels against his religion, the merchant had not the courage to offer any resistance. "Come," said he, "that is the very thing I wish; we shall see who is wrong, you or I."

Ali Cogia conducted the merchant before the tribunal of the cadi, where he accused him of having stolen a thousand pieces of gold which were deposited in his care, relating the fact as it took place. The cadi inquired if he had any witnesses. He replied that he had not taken this precaution, because he supposed the person to whom he had intrusted his money to be his friend, and that till now he had every reason to believe him an honest man.

The merchant urged nothing more in his defence than what he had already said to Ali Cogia in the presence of his neighbours, and he concluded by offering to take his oath, not only that it was false that he had taken the thousand pieces of gold, but even that he had any knowledge of their being in his possession. The cadi accepted the oath, after which he was dismissed as innocent.

Ali Cogia, extremely mortified to find himself condemned to suffer so considerable a loss, protested against the sentence, and declared to the cadi that he would lay his complaint before the caliph Haroun Alraschid, who would do him justice; but the cadi did not regard this threat, and he considered it merely as the effect of the resentment natural to all who lose their cause; and he thought he had performed his duty by acquitting one who was accused without any witnesses to prove the fact.

While the merchant was triumphing in his success over Ali Cogia, and indulging his joy at having made so good a bargain of the thousand pieces of gold, Ali Cogia went to draw up a petition; and the next day, having chosen the time when the caliph should return from mid-day prayers, he placed himself in a street which led to the mosque; and when he passed, held out his hand with the petition. An officer to whom this function belongs, who was walking before the caliph, instantly left his place, and came to take it that he might present it to his master.

As Ali Cogia knew that it was the usual custom of the caliph Haroun Alraschid, when he returned to his palace, to examine with his own eyes all the petitions that were presented to him in this way, he therefore followed the procession, went into the palace, and waited till the officer, who had taken the petition, should come out of the apartment of the caliph. When he made

his appearance, he told Ali Cogia that the caliph had read his petition, and appointed the following day to give him an audience; and having inquired of him where the merchant lived, he sent to give him notice to attend the next day at the same time.

On the evening of the same day, the caliph, with the grand vizier Giafar, and Mesrour, the chief of the eunuchs, all three disguised in the same manner, went to make his usual excursion into the city, as I have already told your majesty it was his custom frequently to do. In passing through a street the caliph heard a noise; he hastened his pace and came to a door which opened into a court, where ten or twelve children, who had not gone to rest, were playing by moonlight, as he perceived by looking through a crevice.

The caliph, feeling some curiosity to know what these children were playing at, sat down on a stone bench, which was placed very conveniently near the door; and as he was looking at them through the crevice, he heard one of the most lively and intelligent amongst them say to the others, "Let us play at the *cadi*; I am the *cadi*, bring before me Ali Cogia, and the merchant who stole the thousand pieces of gold from him."

These words of the child reminded the caliph of the petition which had been presented to him that day, and which he had read; he therefore redoubled his attention to hear what would be the event of the trial.

As the affair between Ali Cogia and the merchant was a new thing, and much talked of in the city of Bagdad, even amongst children, the rest of this youthful party joyfully agreed to the proposal, and each chose the character he would perform. No one disputed the part of *cadi* with him who had made choice of it, and when he had taken his seat with all the pomp and gravity of a *cadi*, another personating the officer who attends the tribunal, presented two others to him, one of whom he called Ali Cogia, and the next the merchant, against whom Ali Cogia preferred his complaint.

The pretended *cadi* then addressed them, and gravely interrogating the feigned Ali Cogia, "Ali Cogia," said he, "what do you require of this merchant?" He who personated this character then made a profound obeisance, and informed the *cadi* of the fact in every point, and concluded by beseeching him to be pleased to interpose his authority, to prevent his sustaining so considerable a loss. The feigned *cadi*, after having listened to Ali Cogia, turned to the merchant, and asked him why he did not return to Ali Cogia the sum he demanded of him. This young merchant made use of the same arguments which the real one had alleged before the *cadi* of Bagdad, and also in the same manner asked him to suffer him to swear that what he said was the truth.

"Not so fast," replied the pretended *cadi*; "before we come to swearing, I should like to see the jar of olives. Ali Cogia," said he, addressing the boy who acted this part, "have you brought the jar with you?" As the latter replied that he had not, he desired him to go and fetch it.

Ali Cogia disappeared for a few moments, and then returning, pretended to bring a jar to the *cadi*, which he said was the same that had been deposited with the merchant, and was now returned to him. Not to omit any of the usual forms, the *cadi* asked the merchant if he owned it to be the same jar, and the merchant proving by his silence that he could not deny it, he ordered it to be opened. The feigned Ali Cogia then made the action of taking off the cover, and the *cadi* that of looking into the jar. "These are fine olives, let me taste," said he: then, pretending to take one to taste, he added, "they are excellent. But," continued he, "I think that olives which have been kept seven years, would not be so good. Order some olive merchants to be called, and let them give their opinion." Two boys were then presented to him. "Are you olive merchants?" he inquired; to which they having replied in

the affirmative, he added, "Tell me, then, if you know how long olives that are prepared by people who make it their business, can be preserved good to eat?"

"Sir," replied the feigned merchants, "whatever care may be taken to preserve them, they are worth nothing after the third year; they lose both their flavour and colour, and are only fit to be thrown away." "If that be the case," resumed the young *cadi*, "look at this jar, and tell me how long the olives have been kept that are in it."

The feigned merchants then pretended to examine and taste the olives, and told the *cadi* that they were fresh and good. "You are mistaken," replied the *cadi*; "here is Ali Cogia, who says that he put them into the jar seven years ago." "Sir," said the merchants, "we can assure you that these olives are of this year's growth, and we will maintain that there is not a single merchant in Bagdad who will not be of the same way of thinking." The accused merchant was going to protest against this testimony of the others, but the *cadi* did not allow him time. "Silence," said he, "thou art a thief, and shalt be hanged." The children then clapped their hands, showed great marks of joy, and finished their game by seizing the supposed criminal, and carrying him off as if to execution.

It is impossible to express how much the caliph Haroun Alraschid admired the wisdom and acuteness of the boy, who had pronounced so just a sentence on the very case which was to be pleaded before him on the morrow. Taking his eyes from the crevice, he rose, and asked the grand vizier, who had been attending to all that passed, if he had heard the sentence given by the boy, and what he thought of it. "Commander of the Faithful," replied Giasar, "I am astonished at the wisdom evinced by this boy at so early an age."

"But," resumed the caliph, "do you know that to-morrow I am to give my decision on this very affair, and that the true Ali Cogia has this morning presented a petition to me on the subject?" "So I understand from your majesty," replied the grand vizier. "Do you think," said the caliph, "that I can give a juster sentence than that we have now heard?" "If the affair be the same," returned the grand vizier, "it appears to me that your majesty cannot proceed in a better manner, nor give any other judgment." "Notice well this house, then," said the caliph, "and bring me the boy to-morrow, that he may judge the same cause in my presence. Order the *cadi*, also, who acquitted the merchant, to be at the palace, that he may learn his duty from this child, and correct his deficiencies. I desire, too, that you will tell Ali Cogia to bring with him his jar of olives, and do you procure two olive merchants to be present at the audience." The caliph gave this order as he continued his walk, which he finished without meeting with anything else that deserved his attention.

On the morrow the grand vizier repaired to the house where the caliph had been witness to the game the children had played at, and he asked to speak to the master of it, but he being gone out, he was introduced to the mistress. He asked her if she had any children; she replied that she had three, whom she brought to him. "My children," said he to them, "which of you acted the *cadi* last night as you were playing together?" The eldest replied that it was he; and as he was ignorant of the reason for this question, he changed colour. "My child," said the grand vizier, "come with me; the Commander of the Faithful wishes to see you."

The mother was extremely alarmed when she saw that the vizier was going to take away her son. "Sir," said she, "is it to take away my son entirely that the Commander of the Faithful has sent for him?" The grand vizier quieted her fears, by promising that her son should be sent back again in less than an hour, and that when he returned she would learn the reason of his being

sent for, which would give her great pleasure. "If that be the case, sir," replied she, "permit me first to change his dress, that he may be more fit to appear before the Commander of the Faithful," and she immediately put him on a clean one.

The grand vizier conducted the boy to the caliph, and presented him at the time appointed for hearing Ali Cogia and the merchant.

The caliph, seeing the child rather terrified, and wishing to prepare him for what he expected him to do, said to him, "Come here, my boy, draw near; was it you who yesterday passed sentence on the case of Ali Cogia and the merchant who robbed him of his gold? I both saw and heard you, and am very well satisfied with you." The child began to gain confidence, and modestly answered that it was he. "My child," resumed the caliph, "you shall see the true Ali Cogia and the merchant to-day; come and sit down next to me."

The caliph then took the boy by the hand, and seated himself on his throne, and having placed him next to him, he inquired for the parties; they advanced, and the name of each was pronounced as he touched with his forehead the carpet that covered the throne. When they had risen, the caliph said to them, "Let each of you plead your cause; this child will hear and administer justice to you, and if anything be deficient I will remedy it."

Ali Cogia and the merchant each spoke in his turn; and when the merchant requested to be allowed to take the same oath he had taken on his first examination, the boy answered, that it was not yet time, for it was first necessary to inspect the jar of olives. At these words, Ali Cogia produced the jar, placed it at the feet of the caliph, and uncovered it. The caliph looked at the olives, and took one, which he tasted. The jar was then handed to some skilful merchants who had been ordered to appear, and they reported it as their opinion that the olives were good, and of that year's growth. The boy told them that Ali Cogia assured him they had been in the jar seven years, to which the merchants returned the same answer which the children as feigned merchants had made on the preceding evening.

Although the accused merchant plainly saw that the two olive merchants had thus pronounced his condemnation, yet he nevertheless attempted to allege reasons in his justification; the boy, however, did not venture to pronounce sentence on him and send him to execution. "Commander of the Faithful," said he, "this is not a game; it is your majesty alone who can condemn to death seriously, and not me; I did it yesterday only in play."

The caliph, fully persuaded of the treachery of the merchant, gave him up to the ministers of justice to have him hung; and this sentence was executed after he had confessed where the thousand pieces of gold were concealed, which were then returned to Ali Cogia. This monarch, in short, so celebrated for his justice and equity, after having advised the cadi who had passed the first sentence, and who was present, to learn from a child to be more exact in the performance of his office, embraced the boy, and sent him home again with a purse containing a hundred pieces of gold, which he ordered to be given him as a proof of his liberality.

Scheherazade, having thus concluded this story, went on to relate to the sultan, who took great delight in them, many others; and she began the next as follows.

THE STORY OF THE ENCHANTED HORSE.

As your majesty well knows, the Nevrouz, or new day, which is the first of the year, and of spring, and thus called by way of superior distinction, is a festival so solemn and so ancient throughout the whole extent of Persia, taking its origin even from the earliest periods of idolatry, that the holy religion of our prophet, pure and unsullied as it is, and esteemed by those who profess it as the only true one, has nevertheless been hitherto unable to abolish it; although we must confess that it is a custom completely pagan, and that the ceremonies observed on its solemnization are of the most superstitious nature. Not to mention the large cities, there is no town, borough, village, or hamlet, however small, where the festival is not celebrated with extraordinary rejoicing.

But those which take place at court surpass all others by the variety of new and surprising spectacles which are exhibited on the occasion; many foreigners also from the neighbouring, as well as the more distant nations, are attracted by the liberality of the monarch, who rewards those who excel in industry, or produce new inventions, so that nothing that is attempted in other parts of the world can approach or be compared with the sumptuous magnificence of this anniversary.

At one of these festivals, after the most skilful and ingenious persons of the country, together with the foreigners who had repaired to Schiraz, where the court was then assembled, had presented the king and his nobles with all the various spectacles intended for their entertainment; and when the monarch had as usual distributed his gifts according to the merit each had displayed, in producing either extraordinary or pleasing specimens of his genius, with an equity which satisfied all to the summit of their expectations; at the very moment when he was going to withdraw, the assembly to disperse, and each to retire to his respective home, an Indian appeared and presented himself at the foot of the throne, leading a horse saddled and bridled, and most richly caparisoned and so skilfully represented, that at first sight every one supposed it to be a real horse.

The Indian prostrated himself before the throne; when he had risen, he showed the horse to the king, and thus addressed him. "Sire, although I am the last to present myself before your majesty as a candidate for your favour, I can nevertheless assure you, that in this day of feasting and rejoicing, you have not seen anything so wonderful and astonishing as this horse, which I entreat you to condescend to look at." "I see nothing in this horse," replied the king, "but the strong resemblance to nature, which the workman, by means of art and industry, has given it. Another workman might have made one like it, and have brought it to still greater perfection."

"Sire," resumed the Indian, "it is not by its exterior construction, nor by its appearance, that I wish to attract your majesty's attention to my horse. It is only by the use I make of it, and in which any one besides myself can employ it by means of a secret which I am enabled to communicate. When I mount him, in whatever region of the earth I may be, and at whatever distance, if I wish to transport myself through the air to any particular spot, I can accomplish it in a marvellously short space of time. In short, sire, it is in this peculiar property that the wonders of my horse consist; wonders which no one ever heard of, and of which I am ready to give your majesty any proof that you may require."

The king of Persia, who was extremely curious in everything that appeared of a scientific construction, and who in all the different things of this nature

which he had seen, inquired about, and desired to see, had never met with or heard of anything at all resembling this horse, told the Indian that nothing except the proof he had proposed to show him could convince him of the superiority of his horse, and that therefore he was ready to witness the truth of his assertion.

The Indian instantly set his foot into the stirrup and lightly threw himself on the horse; when he had got his foot in the opposite stirrup, and was seated firm in his saddle, he asked the king of Persia where he would wish to send him.

At the distance of about three leagues from Schiraz, there was a high mountain, which was easily discernible from the large square before the royal palace, where the king and all his court and people were assembled. "Do you see that mountain?" said the king, showing it to the Indian; "it is thither that I wish you to go; the distance is not very great, but it is sufficient to judge by it of your diligence in going thither and returning. And as it is not possible for my sight to extend thus far, as a certain proof of your having been there, I propose that you should bring me a branch from a palm-tree, which grows at the foot of the mountain."

The king of Persia had scarcely declared his wishes by these words, than the Indian turned a little peg which was placed a little above the pommel of the saddle, on the horse's neck. At the same instant the horse rose from the ground, bearing the Indian through the air as quick as lightning, to such an immense height, that in a few minutes even those who had the longest and clearest sight could no longer discern him; this excited the astonishment of the king and his courtiers, and shouts of admiration were heard from all the spectators.

A quarter of an hour had scarcely elapsed since the departure of the Indian, before they perceived him high in the air, returning with a palm-branch in his hand. He soon arrived over the square, where he performed several feats amidst the acclamations of the admiring multitude, and then came down immediately before the throne on which the king was sitting, at the same spot from whence he had taken his aerial excursion, and without experiencing any inconvenience from the horse alighting too suddenly. He got off, and approaching the throne, prostrated himself, and laid the branch at the feet of the king.

The king, who had witnessed with no less admiration than astonishment the unheard-of exploit which the Indian had just exhibited, immediately conceived a strong desire to become the possessor of this wonderful horse. And as he was persuaded he should find no difficulty in treating with the Indian, being resolved to give him whatever sum he might require for it, he already regarded it as his own, and as the most valuable addition to his treasures, amongst which he intended to place it. "Judging of your horse by its exterior appearance," said he to the Indian, "I did not conceive that it could deserve the high commendation which, as you have just shown me, it so justly merits. I am obliged to you for having undeceived me, and to show you how much I esteem and value it, I am ready to purchase it, if it is to be disposed of."

"Sire," replied the Indian, "I had no doubt that your majesty, who is said to excel all the kings who now reign over the earth in knowledge and judgment, would bestow on my horse that commendation with which you have honoured it, when you were acquainted with those properties which deserve your attention. I had also foreseen that you would not be satisfied with admiring and praising it, but that you would immediately wish to have it in your own possession, as you have now informed me. For my part, sire, although I am as much aware of the value of it as any one can be, and know that the possession of it is alone sufficient to render my name immortal, yet I am never-

theless not so much attached to it as to refuse to deprive myself of it, to gratify the noble desires of your majesty. But although I make this declaration, I have another to propose relating to the conditions which must be fulfilled before I can consent to let it pass into other hands, and with these you may perhaps not be satisfied.

"Your majesty will allow me," continued the Indian, "to remark that I did not purchase this horse; I obtained it of the inventor and maker, on condition of giving him my only daughter in marriage as a recompense, and he at the same time exacted from me a promise that I should never sell it, and that if I parted with it to another person, it should only be in exchange for what I might think proper."

The Indian was going to continue, but the king interrupted him when he mentioned the word exchange. "I am ready," said he, "to grant you anything in exchange that you will ask of me. You know that my dominions are extensive, that they are richly overspread with powerful, wealthy, and populous cities; I leave you to choose any one that you like, to be yours in full sovereignty and power for the rest of your days."

This exchange appeared to all the court of Persia an offer truly royal, and worthy of a king, but it was far below the recompense the Indian had proposed to himself. He had extended his views to far higher prospects. He replied to the king: "Sire, I am infinitely obliged to your majesty for the offer you have made me, and I cannot sufficiently thank you for your generosity. I entreat you however not to be displeased at my temerity, in venturing to tell you that I cannot deliver my horse into your possession except on receiving the hand of the princess your daughter as my wife. I am resolved not to part with it on any other terms."

The courtiers who surrounded the king of Persia could not avoid bursting into a violent fit of laughter at this extravagant request of the Indian. But Prince Firouz Schah, the eldest son of the king, and heir to the crown, heard it with the utmost indignation. The king was of a different opinion, and did not feel much scruple about sacrificing the princess of Persia to the Indian, that he might gratify his curiosity. He however hesitated for some time what course to pursue.

Prince Firouz Schah, who saw the king his father meditating on the answer he should give the Indian, was fearful lest he should grant him his demand, a circumstance which would in his eyes have been equally injurious to the royal dignity, to the princess his sister, and to himself. He therefore determined to interfere, and addressing the king, "Sire," said he, "your majesty will pardon me if I take the liberty of asking you if it be possible that you can hesitate a moment on the absolute refusal you ought to make to so insolent a request from a man whom no one knows, from an ignominious mountebank; and that you can allow him the slightest encouragement to flatter himself that he is going to be allied to one of the greatest and most powerful monarchs of the earth? I entreat you consider not only what you owe to yourself, but what is due to your rank, and to the high blood of your ancestors."

"My son," replied the king of Persia, "I receive your remonstrance in good part, and commend you for the zeal you evince in wishing to preserve the nobleness and brilliancy of your birth, unsullied and pure as you received it; but you do not sufficiently consider the wondrous excellence of this horse; and that the Indian who proposes to me this method of obtaining it, may, if I refuse him, go to some other court, make the same proposition, and have it accepted; and I confess I should be mortified to the greatest degree if any other monarch should boast of having surpassed me in generosity; and of having thus deprived me of the honour and glory of possessing a horse which I esteem as the

most singular and admirable thing the world contains. I will not, however, say that I consent to grant him his demand; perhaps he is not perfectly aware of the exorbitance of his pretensions; and I may be able to make some agreement with him which may satisfy him, leaving the princess out of the question. But before we come to the concluding bargain, I wish you to examine the horse, and make trial of him yourself, that you may give me your opinion of him. I dare say he will have no objection to this proposal."

As it is natural to hope for what one wishes, the Indian thought he could perceive from this conversation that the king of Persia had not so strong an aversion against his entering into alliance with the royal family, by taking the horse on these terms, and he thought it not impossible that, although the prince now appeared so entirely to oppose his views, he might in time become favourable to them. Instead, therefore, of refusing the wish mentioned by the king, he on the contrary seemed rejoiced at it, and as a further proof that he consented to it with pleasure, he went towards the prince with the horse, assisted him to mount, and afterwards instructed him in what he was to do to govern it properly.

The prince with great agility mounted the horse immediately without the assistance of the Indian; he secured each foot in the stirrup, and without waiting for any farther directions he turned the peg, which he had observed the Indian do just before when he mounted. The very instant he had turned it, the horse rose with him with the swiftness of an arrow shot by the strongest archer, and in a few moments the king, as well as all the numerous assemblage of people who were present, lost sight of him.

Neither the horse nor Prince Firouz Schah appeared again, and the king of Persia strained his eyes to descry him in the air, but all in vain, when the Indian, alarmed at the consequences that might ensue, prostrated himself at the foot of the throne and entreated the king to deign to look upon him, and pay attention to what he wished to say; he then proceeded in these words: "Your majesty, sire, must have observed that the prince in his impatience did not allow me time to give him the necessary instructions for the management of my horse. He conceived it needless to receive any farther advice after having seen what I did to elevate myself in the air; but he is ignorant of the measures that are to be taken to turn the horse and make it come back to the place from whence it set off. Therefore, sire, the favour I have to request of your majesty is, that you will not consider me as responsible for what may befall his person. I am convinced you are too equitable to impute to me any accident that he may encounter."

The Indian's speech gave the king of Persia infinite concern; he was now aware of the inevitable danger his son must be in if what the Indian said were true, that the secret for making the horse return was different from that which made it set out and rise in the air. He asked him why he did not call him back at the moment he saw him depart.

"Sire," replied the Indian, "your majesty observed the extreme swiftness with which the horse and prince ascended. The surprise I experienced at the moment took from me all power of utterance, and when I was able to speak, he was already so distant that he could not have heard my voice; and even if he had heard it, he could not have managed the horse to make it return, as he was unacquainted with the secret for that purpose, which he would not have the patience to learn from me. But sire," added he, "there is still some reason to hope that the prince, in the embarrassment he must feel, before he has proceeded far may remark another peg, in turning which the horse will cease to ascend, and will come towards the earth, where he may alight in whatever spot he pleases, by guiding the horse by the bridle."

Notwithstanding this reasoning of the Indian, which had all the appearance of plausibility, the king of Persia was extremely alarmed for the imminent peril in which his son was placed. "I will suppose," said he, "that the prince perceives the other peg you mention, which nevertheless is scarcely probable, and that he uses it as you say, the horse perhaps, instead of descending gradually to the earth, may fall on rocks, or dash headlong with him into the middle of the sea." "Sire," resumed the Indian, "I can dispel this apprehension, by assuring your majesty, that the horse passes over any extent of sea without any danger of falling into it, and that he always carries his rider where he intends to go; and you may be satisfied that if the prince does but perceive the peg I speak of, the horse will carry him only to the place where he wishes to alight; and it is not likely that he should attempt to alight in any but a convenient situation, where he can obtain assistance and make himself known."

To these consoling assurances of the Indian the king replied, "Be that as it may, as I cannot rely on the promises you make me, I now declare to you that your head shall be the forfeit, if in three months the prince my son does not return in safety, or I do not at least hear satisfactory accounts of his welfare." He immediately ordered the Indian to be seized and confined in close imprisonment, after which he returned to his palace in the greatest affliction that the feast of the Nevrouz, which was so solemnly observed throughout Persia, should have terminated so fatally for him and his court.

Prince Firouz Schah, in the mean time, was elevated in the air, with the rapidity we have already described; and in less than an hour he found himself at such an immense height that he could no longer distinguish any object on the earth, nor discern the mountains from the valleys, which appeared to him one confused mass. He then began to think of returning to the palace from whence he had departed; and to accomplish this, he concluded that if he turned the peg the contrary way, turning the bridle at the same time, he should succeed; but his astonishment was inexpressible, when he perceived that the horse still rose with the same degree of swiftness. He turned it various ways, but found it had no effect; he now felt most poignantly the error he had been guilty of in not procuring from the Indian all the instructions necessary for the management of the horse before he had mounted him. He saw how perilous was his situation; the conviction of his danger, however, did not lessen his presence of mind; he considered what was to be done with all the coolness he was capable of; and in examining the head and neck of the horse with the greatest attention, he perceived another peg, smaller and less discernible than the first, near the right ear of the horse; he turned it, and instantly remarked that he was beginning to descend towards the earth in the same right line by which he had ascended, but less rapidly.

Night had veiled for more than half an hour the spot over which Prince Firouz Schah found himself at the time he turned the second peg; but as the horse descended with the greatest swiftness, the sun appeared to him to set with equal rapidity, and he soon found himself enveloped in the duskiness of night; so that far from being able to make choice of a commodious situation on which to alight, he was under the necessity of letting the reins fall on the horse's neck, and waiting with patience till he had reached the earth, not without feeling some uneasiness about the place where he should stop, whether it would be inhabited or deserted, a river or the sea.

It was past midnight when the horse stopped, and Prince Firouz Schah dismounted; he felt himself much fatigued and weakened, owing to want of food, not having tasted any since the morning, before he left the palace, to be present at the various spectacles exhibited at the festival. The first thing he

did, notwithstanding the obscurity that prevailed, was to endeavour to discover what place he was in, and he found himself on the terraced roof of a magnificent palace, which had a marble balustrade running round it breast high. While examining the terrace, he discovered the staircase which led to the interior of the palace, the door of which was half open.

Any one less enterprising than Firouz Schah might not perhaps have felt inclined to go down the stairs in such profound darkness, ignorant also whether he might meet with friends or enemies; but this consideration had no weight with him, and did not damp his courage. "I do not come here to injure any one," thought he, "and most probably the first I meet with, as they will see me without any weapon in my hands, will have the humanity to listen to me before they attempt to deprive me of life." He therefore opened the door a little further, without making any noise, and went down with the utmost caution, lest he should make any false step, the sound of which might wake some of the inhabitants. He succeeded, and having reached a landing-place on the stairs, he found a door open, which led into a large room, where there was a light.

Prince Firouz Schah stopped some time at the door to listen, but he heard no sound except that of people in the depth of sleep, who snored in different tones. He advanced a few steps into the room, and by the light of a lamp perceived that those who were sleeping were some black eunuchs, each lying with a drawn sabre next him; and this led him to suppose that they were guarding the apartment of some queen or princess. In fact, it was that of a princess.

The chamber in which she slept was next to the room where the eunuchs were placed, and was easily discernible by the great light which shone through a slight silk hanging that concealed the door. The prince advanced towards this hanging with light steps, and reached it without waking the eunuchs; he drew it aside and entered the chamber. The regal magnificence of the decorations was no object to him in his present situation, and did not attract his attention, which was wholly engaged on what was to him of greater consequence. He observed several beds, only one of which was raised on a sofa, the others being below it. The women belonging to the princess were lying on the lower ones to bear her company and attend on her, and the princess herself was in the more elevated one.

Guided by this distinction, Firouz Schah could not be mistaken in the choice he should make, whom to address. He approached the princess's bed without disturbing either her or her women. When he was sufficiently near to observe her distinctly, his eyes beheld such enchanting and wonderful beauty that he was quite charmed, and instantly felt the flame of love in his heart. "Heavens," exclaimed he to himself, "has my wayward fate led me hither to deprive me of that liberty I have till now so uniformly maintained! Am I not to expect inevitable enthrallment when those eyes are unclosed, which must add so much lustre and brilliancy to that assemblage of charms? Yet I must be content to submit, since I cannot quit this spot without becoming my own destroyer, and I must needs await the decree of my destiny."

Occupied by reflections of this nature, which the beauty of the princess and the situation in which he found himself inspired, he placed himself on his knees, and taking hold of the princess's sleeve, which but partly concealed an arm of exquisite form and incomparable whiteness, he gently pulled it. The princess awoke, and opening her eyes, was in the utmost astonishment at beholding near her a man of handsome countenance, well formed and elegantly dressed; the surprise she felt did not, however, betray her into any evident emotions of alarm.

The prince took advantage of this favourable moment; he bowed his head

to the floor, and when he raised it, "Illustrious princess," said he, "in consequence of an adventure of the most astonishing and surprising nature you can possibly conceive, you now see at your feet a supplicating prince, the son of the king of Persia, who yesterday morning was assisting with his father at the celebration of a solemn festival, and who now finds himself in the most imminent danger of perishing, if you will not have the goodness and generosity to bestow on him your aid. This protection, most adorable princess, I implore, in the full confidence that you will not refuse it me. I venture to flatter myself that my hopes are not fallacious, from the conviction that inhumanity cannot take up its abode with such incomparable charms and such majestic superiority."

The lady to whom Prince Firouz Schah had thus passionately addressed himself was the princess of Bengal, eldest daughter of the king who reigned over the kingdom of that name, and who had built this palace for her at a short distance from the capital, whither she frequently resorted to enter into the diversions of the country. Having listened to the prince with all the complaisance he could possibly desire, she replied to him with equal affability: "Prince," said she, "take courage; you are not in a country of barbarians; hospitality, humanity, and politeness, hold their reign in the kingdom of Bengal, with equal sway as in that of Persia. It is not I who grant you the protection you demand; you are entitled to it, and will experience it not only in my palace, but also in every part of these dominions. You may believe me, and confide in my word."

The prince of Persia was going to express his acknowledgments to the princess of Bengal for her politeness, and the favour she had granted him in so obliging a manner, and had already bowed his head very low in order to speak, but she prevented him; "I feel the greatest curiosity," said she, "to be informed from your own lips by what wonderful adventure you could have travelled hither in so short a space of time from the capital of Persia, and by what enchantment you could have penetrated into my apartment, and presented yourself before me so secretly that you have evaded the vigilance of my guards. But as I am certain you must be in want of some refreshment, and I wish to treat you as a guest who deserves a good welcome, I will restrain my curiosity until to-morrow morning, and at present only give orders to my women to prepare a chamber for your reception, and provide you with everything necessary; you will there refresh and repose yourself until you feel sufficiently recovered to be able to satisfy my wishes, by which time I shall be prepared to listen to you."

The princess's women awoke at the first words which Prince Firouz Schah addressed to their royal mistress; and their astonishment at seeing him on his knees before the bed of the princess was increased by being unable to account for his introduction into her chamber without having disturbed either them or the eunuchs. Those women no sooner understood the princess's intentions than they arose and quickly dressed themselves, and were ready to execute any orders they might receive from her. They each took one of the numerous lighted tapers which illuminated the princess's apartment, and when the prince retired they walked before him, and conducted him into a beautiful chamber; while one part of them prepared him a bed, the others went into the kitchen to procure him some refreshment. And although the hour was so unseasonable for such occupations they nevertheless were so diligent that he had not long to wait for his repast. They brought him a great abundance of various dishes; he partook of what he liked, and having satisfied his hunger, they cleared all away, and left him at liberty to go to bed, having first pointed out to him where he might find everything he could require.

The princess of Bengal was so struck with the understanding, politeness, and other amiable qualities of the prince of Persia, in the short conversation she had held with him, that her mind was wholly occupied by him; and she had not yet been able to close her eyes when her women returned into the chamber to go to bed. She inquired if they had taken care to provide him with everything he wanted; if he appeared satisfied; above all, what they thought of his person.

The women having given satisfactory answers to the former questions, thus replied to the latter: "We know not, princess, what opinion you have yourself formed of him, but on our parts we should esteem you very fortunate, if the king your father would bestow you on so amiable a prince in marriage. There is no one at the court of Bengal who can be compared to him, and we have not heard that any of the neighbouring states can produce a prince worthy of you."

This flattering speech did not displease the princess of Bengal; but as she did not choose to reveal her own sentiments, she commanded them to be silent. "You are idle chatterers," said she; "get to bed, and let me go to sleep again." The next morning, the first care that engaged the princess after she rose was to perform the duties of the toilet. She had never before taken such pains in adorning herself as on that day, and she passed more time than usual in consulting her mirror. Her women had never before been obliged to exercise so much patience in doing and undoing the same thing several times till she was contented.

"I could plainly discern," thought she to herself, "that I was not displeasing to the prince of Persia, in my undress; but he shall see a far different object when I am decorated in all my splendour." She adorned her head with the largest and most brilliant diamonds, and wore a necklace, and bracelets, and girdle, formed of the same precious materials, all of inestimable value; and the dress she put on was composed of the richest silk that India could produce, which was wrought only for kings, princes, or princesses of the highest rank, and was of a colour that displayed her beauty to the greatest advantage. When she had again repeatedly consulted her mirror, and asked her women separately if anything was wanting, to complete the magnificence of her appearance, she sent to inquire if the prince of Persia was awake, and dressed; and concluding, that he would ask permission to present himself before her, she desired him to be informed that she was coming to him, and that she had particular reasons for acting thus.

The prince of Persia having made up in the day the quantity of rest he had lost in the night, and being now perfectly recovered from his fatiguing journey, had just finished dressing himself, when he received a message from the princess of Bengal, by one of her women, to inquire how he had passed the night.

Without waiting for the princess's woman to deliver her message, he immediately inquired if her mistress was ready to receive his respects. But when the woman had performed the order she had received, "The princess," said he, "is mistress here, and I am in her house only to obey her commands."

The princess was no sooner informed that the prince of Persia was ready to receive her, than she went to his apartment. Many compliments were exchanged on each side, the prince apologizing for having awakened the princess out of her sleep, for which he entreated her pardon, and she inquiring how he had passed the night, and whether he now found himself recovered. The princess then seated herself on the sofa, and Firouz Schah followed her example, placing himself however at some distance, to show his respect.

The princess then began the conversation: "Prince," said she, "I might have received you in the chamber where you found me in bed last night; but as the chief of my eunuchs has the liberty of going there, and as he never enters

this place without my express permission, I preferred this, as being less likely to suffer from interruption. I feel the utmost impatience to become acquainted with the extraordinary adventure which procures me the happiness of seeing you; I therefore entreat you to oblige me with the detail of what I am so anxious to know."

In order to give the princess full satisfaction on every point relating to himself, Firouz Schah began by giving her an account of the annual festival of Nevrouz, and of the strange introduction of, and his own adventure with, the enchanted horse. "You may easily imagine, princess," he continued, "that the king my father, who spares no expense to increase his collection of the most rare and curious productions that can be obtained, would feel an anxious desire to add to it a horse of so extraordinary a nature; he in fact did so, and did not long hesitate to ask the Indian at what sum he estimated its value.

"The Indian's reply was the most extravagant you can conceive. He said that he had not purchased the horse, but had acquired it in exchange for his only daughter; and that, as he could not consent to deprive himself of it but on similar terms, he would not resign it to him, except on condition of his consenting to give him the princess my sister in marriage.

"The crowd of courtiers who surrounded my father's throne, and heard this extravagant proposition, openly laughed at the absurdity of it; for my part, I felt such violent indignation, that I could not dissemble my emotion, the less too, because I found the king wavering as to the answer he should make. In fact, I firmly believe that he was on the point of granting him his request, if I had not represented to him in the most forcible terms, the stain by which he was going to tarnish his glory. My remonstrances, however, were not sufficiently effectual to make him abandon entirely all intention of sacrificing the princess my sister to so despicable a wretch. He supposed I might accede to his wishes, if I could but entertain the same opinion of the inestimable value of the horse which he had conceived. With this view, he desired me to examine and mount it, and make trial of it myself.

"To please the king my father I complied, and mounted the horse; and as soon as I was on it, having seen the Indian turn a peg, which occasioned the horse to rise with him, I did the same thing, without waiting for any further instructions from him, and in an instant, I rose in the air with a swiftness far surpassing that of an arrow, shot by the most experienced archer.

"In a short time I was at such a distance from the earth, that I could no longer distinguish any object, and I appeared to be approaching so near the vault of heaven, that I began to be apprehensive that I should hit against it. The rapidity of the motion by which I ascended, for some time deprived me of my recollection, and rendered me insensible of the danger to which I was on all sides exposed. At length I attempted to turn the peg in a contrary direction, supposing that I should by that means descend: but the effect did not answer my expectation. The horse continued to bear me still higher and further from the earth. After some time, I discovered another peg; I turned it, and soon perceived that the horse, instead of rising, began to descend; and as I soon found myself in the shades of night, and it being impossible to guide the horse to any place of safety, I loosened the reins, and resigned myself to the will of God, to dispose of me as he thought best.

"The horse at last reached the ground, and I dismounted. I examined the place where I was, and discovered it to be the terrace of this palace. I found the door of the staircase half open, and I went down without making any noise; I came to an open door, from which a faint light glimmered. I looked in, and saw the eunuchs asleep, and beyond, a considerable light, which shone through a hanging. Notwithstanding the hazard I ran if the eunuchs awoke, yet the

present necessity of my situation inspired me with courage, not to say temerity, and I advanced towards the second door as lightly as possible.

There is no occasion, princess, to describe what followed; you know it already. Nothing remains but to thank you for your kindness and generosity, and to entreat you to tell me, by what means I can evince my gratitude for so great an obligation in a way that will be acceptable to you. As, according to the rights of mankind, I am now your slave, and cannot therefore offer you my person, I have nothing left except my heart. But what do I say, lovely princess? This heart is no longer mine; you have ravished it from me by your charms; and far from asking you to return it to me, I resign it entirely to you. Permit me therefore to declare to you, that in you I acknowledge the mistress not only of my heart, but of my whole thoughts."

These last words were pronounced by Prince Firouz Schah with a tone and air, which fully convinced the princess of Bengal of the successful effect she had endeavoured to accomplish. She was not displeased with this sudden declaration of the prince of Persia; and the blushes which overspread her cheeks, heightened her beauty, and rendered her still more interesting in his eyes.

When he had finished speaking, "Prince," replied she, "the pleasure you afforded me by your account of all the wonderful and surprising things you first described, was much lessened by the terror I felt when I conceived you in the highest regions of the air; and although I had the happiness of seeing you before me in perfect safety, yet my fears did not cease till you told me that the Indian's horse was come to alight on the terrace of my palace. The same thing might have happened in a thousand different places; and I am delighted that chance should have given me the preference, and at the same time the opportunity of telling you, that although you might have been guided to some other spot, you would never have been received with a more heartfelt welcome.

"I should therefore feel hurt and offended, prince, if I could believe that you seriously considered yourself in the light of my slave, as you just now represented yourself. I attribute that expression to your politeness, rather than to your sincerity; and the reception you met with on your arrival, ought to convince you that you are not less at liberty here than in the midst of the Persian court.

"As for your heart," added the princess, in a tone which little denoted a refusal, "as I am fully persuaded that you have not reserved the disposal of it to the present time, and that you have doubtless made choice of a princess who deserves your affection, I should be sorry to be the cause of your inconstancy to her."

The prince was going to make the most solemn protestations that no object had yet occupied his heart; but at the instant he was beginning to speak, one of the princess's attendants came to acquaint them that dinner was served. This interruption relieved both from the necessity of an explanation, which would have been equally embarrassing. The princess remained in perfect conviction of the sincerity of the prince; and although she had not explained herself, he nevertheless judged from the nature of her answer, and the favourable manner in which she had listened to him, that he had every reason to be satisfied with his prospect of success.

As the woman who had announced the dinner held the door open, the princess, as she rose from her seat, said to Firouz Schah, who followed her example, that she did not usually dine at so early an hour, but as she feared he had made but a bad supper, she had ordered it to be served sooner than usual; having said which, she conducted him into a magnificent saloon, where a table was prepared, and covered with great abundance of excellent dishes. They took their places, and had scarcely seated themselves, when a number of the female

slaves belonging to the princess, most richly dressed, and of great beauty, began a delightful concert of instrumental and vocal music, which continued during the whole of the repast.

As the instruments were kept very soft, they did not interrupt any conversation between the prince and princess. In the reciprocal commerce of the various attentions and civilities which the duties of the table called forth, love made much greater progress than if the interview had been premeditated.

At length they rose from table, and she led him into a magnificent room, superbly embellished with gold and azure, and furnished in the richest style of elegance. They sat on a sofa which faced the garden of the palace, the beauty of which struck Prince Firouz Schah, from the uncommon variety of the flowers, shrubs, and trees, all different from those that grow in Persia, yet not inferior to them. Availing himself of the opportunity which this subject afforded him, of beginning a conversation with the princess, he said, "Till now I supposed that there was no country in the world, except Persia, that could boast of superb palaces, and beautiful gardens, worthy of the majesty of kings. But I now perceive, that wherever there are great and powerful monarchs, they build themselves habitations in character with their grandeur and power; and although they may differ in the construction and decorations, they resemble in splendour and magnificence."

"Prince," replied the princess of Bengal, "as I have no idea of the palaces in Persia, I can form no judgment of the comparison you make between those and mine, and cannot, therefore, deliver my opinion; but, however sincere you may be, I can scarcely persuade myself that it is just: you must allow me to suppose that complaisance has some share in what you say. I will not lessen my palace in your estimation; you have too much taste and discernment not to judge of it as it deserves; but I assure you I find it very indifferent, when I compare it with that of the king my father, which infinitely surpasses it in beauty, richness, and grandeur. You will tell me your opinion of it when you shall have seen it. As chance has brought you so far as the capital of this kingdom, I doubt not you will wish to see, and pay your compliments to the king my father, that he may have an opportunity of showing you those attentions which are due to a prince of your rank and merit."

By exciting in the prince of Persia a degree of curiosity to see the palace of Bengal, and be introduced to the king her father, the princess flattered herself that, should she succeed, her father might, when he saw a prince of so elegant an appearance, so clever and so accomplished in every estimable quality, be induced to propose an alliance by offering her to him in marriage; and as she was well persuaded that she was not indifferent to the prince, and that he would not refuse such an alliance, she hoped by these means to obtain the completion of her wishes, still preserving that decorum of conduct necessary in a princess who was desirous of appearing submissive to the commands of her father. But the prince of Persia did not make that reply to her proposal which she expected from him.

"Princess," resumed he, "the preference you have just given to the palace of the king of Bengal over your own, and the manner in which you deliver your opinion, is sufficient to convince me of the sincerity of it. With regard to the proposal you make me of paying my respects to the king your father, I must reply, that it would be not only a great pleasure to me, but an honour also to acquit myself of what I should conceive my duty. But," added he, "I leave you, princess, to judge, whether it would be advisable for me to present myself before the throne of so great a monarch, in the light of a mere adventurer, without any attendants and equipage suitable to my rank."

"Let not that circumstance occasion you a moment's uneasiness," replied

the princess. "You have only to say what you wish, and money shall not be wanting to procure you whatever train of attendants you may desire; I will furnish you with any sum you may want. There are many merchants here of your nation; you may therefore procure anything that you judge necessary to furnish a house that will do you credit, and be in character with your situation in life."

Prince Firouz Schah easily penetrated the intention of the princess in his favour: and the undoubted proofs of her affection, which she by these means evinced, augmented the love he felt for her; but notwithstanding the increasing violence of his passion, he did not give way to it so as to forget the conduct he ought to observe. He replied without the least hesitation, "Princess, I should most willingly accept the obliging offer you have made me, and for which I cannot sufficiently express my gratitude, were I not sensible that the uneasiness the king my father must feel at my absence, requires my immediate return. I should be unworthy of the tenderness and affection he has always shown me if I did not go back to him immediately, to remove the apprehensions he must naturally feel for my safety. I know his character well; and while I have the happiness of enjoying the society of a princess so amiable as yourself, I am persuaded that he is immersed in the deepest affliction, without any hope of ever seeing me more. I trust you will do me the justice to allow, that I cannot, without being guilty of the blackest ingratitude, be dispensed from the obligation of returning to him to restore him to happiness, and perhaps life, which my long protracted absence might deprive him of. After that, too lovely princess," continued he, "if you should esteem me worthy of becoming your husband, as the king my father has always declared that he would not bias my choice of a wife, I should have no difficulty in obtaining his consent to come back again, not as an unknown wanderer, but as the prince of Persia, bearing a proposal from him to contract an alliance with the king of Bengal, by means of our union. I am convinced he will readily accede, when I have informed him of the generous manner in which you received me after my misfortune."

The prince having thus explained his sentiments, the princess of Bengal was too fully satisfied with their justice, to insist any further on his agreeing to the introduction to her father, or to propose anything that might not be consistent with his duty and honour: she was, nevertheless, alarmed at the idea of the sudden departure which he seemed to meditate, and she feared that if he left her so soon, absence might efface her from his memory, and he would forget to fulfil his promise.

To avert this intention, therefore, she said to him, "By making you a proposal, prince, to contribute whatever might be necessary to place you in a situation suited to your rank, preparatory to your introduction to my father, I did not mean to oppose so reasonable an excuse as that you have alleged, and which I had myself foreseen. I should indeed be an accomplice in the error you would commit, could I entertain such a wish; yet I cannot give my approbation to your intention of returning to your own country so soon as you propose. At least grant one favour to my earnest entreaties; allow yourself time to acquire some knowledge of this country; and since my good fortune has decreed that you should have alighted in the kingdom of Bengal, in preference to a desert, or the summit of some steep rock, from whence you could not have reached the habitable world, I entreat you to remain here a sufficient time to be able to take with you to the court of Persia an accurate detail of the country."

The princess gave this turn to her discourse, that the prince might be persuaded to continue with her for some time, when she hoped that, becoming by

insensible degrees more passionately attached to her person and charms, the strong desire he entertained of returning to Persia might decrease, and that he would then determine to appear in public, and be presented to the king of Bengal. He could not refuse the favour she requested, after the kind reception he had met with from her. He acceded, and the princess had now no object but to render his residence with her as agreeable as possible, by all the variety of amusements she could devise.

For several days nothing was thought of but entertainments, balls, concerts, magnificent collations, parties of pleasure in the gardens, and hunting expeditions in the park belonging to the palace, where there were all sorts of animals for that diversion—stags, hinds, deer, roebucks, and other kinds peculiar to the country of Bengal, which were not savage enough to render the chase a dangerous or improper sport for the princess to join in.

When the hunt was over, the prince and princess would meet in some beautiful spot in the park, where a large carpet was spread for them, and cushions placed on it, that they might sit more commodiously. There, recovering from their fatigue, and reposing after the exercise they had taken, they conversed on various subjects. The princess always endeavoured to lead the topic to the greatness, the power, the riches, and the government of Persia, that she might, in reply to what Prince Firouz Schah advanced, enlarge on the advantages possessed by the kingdom of Bengal, and thus persuade him to remain; but the event turned out contrary to both her wishes and expectation.

The prince of Persia, in fact, and without the least exaggeration, gave her so advantageous an account of the power, magnificence, and opulence that reigned in his father's dominions; of its military force, of its commerce, extending both by sea and land to the most distant countries; of the multitude of its cities, all nearly as populous as that in which he had fixed his residence, containing palaces richly furnished, and ready for his immediate reception, according to the different seasons of the year, so that he might enjoy a perpetual spring; in short, he related so many wonders of his native country, that before he had concluded, the princess began to consider the kingdom of Bengal as infinitely inferior to that of Persia in almost every point. And when he requested her, in return, to recount the advantages of her father's kingdom, she could not be prevailed on, for a considerable time, to comply.

At length, however, she consented to give this gratification to Prince Firouz Schah, but not without diminishing much of the superiority which Bengal in some instances possessed over Persia. She so plainly evinced by her conversation that she should feel no difficulty in accompanying him, that he concluded she would consent to the first proposal of that nature which he should make to her; he did not, however, think it proper to mention such a thing until he had remained with her long enough for the blame to be on her side if she expressed a wish of detaining him still longer, and prevented his fulfilling the indispensable duty of returning to the king his father.

For two whole months Prince Firouz Schah entirely devoted himself to the wishes of the princess; he joined in all the amusements she so amply provided for him, with as much avidity as if he had been destined to pass his whole life with her in the same round of diversion. But when this period had elapsed, he took an opportunity of declaring to her in the most serious terms, that he had too long neglected his duty, and begged her to grant him permission to attend to the dictates of filial affection, at the same time repeating his promise of returning immediately with a retinue worthy of himself, as well as of her, to demand her in marriage, according to the usual forms of the king of Bengal.

"Princess," added he, "perhaps you are inclined to suspect my promises from the request I have made, and already place me in the list of those false lovers, who dismiss the object of their affection from their hearts when no longer present; but as a certain proof of the strong and sincere love I feel for you, and which will render my life miserable, when I am absent from so amiable a princess as yourself, who returns it with equal warmth, I would fain ask the favour of conducting you with me, did I not fear that such a proposal might offend you and meet with a refusal."

Prince Firouz Schah perceived that the princess blushed at the last words he uttered, and that, without discovering any symptoms of anger, she hesitated what answer to make; he therefore continued addressing her: "Princess," said he, "if you have any doubts of my father's consent to our union, and of the satisfaction with which he will receive your alliance, allow me to dispel them. As for the king of Bengal, after all the proofs of affection, tenderness, and esteem he has always shown, and still continues to show towards you, he would be far different from what you have described him to me, or rather he would be the enemy of your happiness and peace, if he did not receive with kindness and good-will the embassy my father would send him, to obtain his approbation and consent to our marriage."

The princess of Bengal made no reply to the prince of Persia; but her silence and downcast eyes convinced him more than the most formal declaration, that she felt no repugnance to his proposal, and consented to accompany him into Persia. The only difficulty which presented itself to her imagination was, that the prince was not sufficiently experienced in the management of his horse, and she was apprehensive of meeting with the same embarrassments which had happened to him when he made his first trial. But Prince Firouz soon dissipated all her fears by assuring her that she might safely trust to him, and that after what had happened, he defied even the Indian himself to manage it with more skill and address. She now, therefore, thought only of taking proper measures for her departure, which she effected with so much secrecy, that not one in the palace had the slightest suspicion of their design.

The next morning, a little before break of day, while all the inhabitants of the palace were enjoying the most profound repose, she repaired to the terrace with the prince; he turned the horse towards Persia, and placed it so that the princess could easily mount behind. He mounted first, and when she had seated herself conveniently, and taken his hand for greater safety, she gave the signal for departure; he instantly turned the same peg he had made use of when in the capital of Persia, and the horse rose with them into the air.

The horse went with his usual swiftness, and Prince Firouz Schah managed it with so much skill that in the course of two hours and a half he discovered the capital of Persia. He did not descend in the great square, from whence he had departed, nor even in the palace of the king, but in a sort of country house, at a little distance from the city. He led the princess into a most beautiful apartment, and told her that in order to secure to her those honours and that respect which were due to her rank, he should immediately go to the king his father, and acquaint him of her arrival, and that she would see him again presently; in the mean time he gave orders to the steward of the palace, who was present, to provide everything that the princess could possibly require.

Having left her in this apartment, Prince Firouz Schah desired the steward to get a horse saddled for him; having mounted it, and sent the steward to attend on the princess, with an express order to prepare a breakfast composed of the greatest delicacies he could procure, he set off. As he passed along



THE ENCHANTED HORSE

the road and the street which led to the palace, he was received by the people with every demonstration of joy, for they had despaired of ever seeing him again, and had mourned his loss. The king his father was giving an audience, and was surrounded by his council, all the members of which, as well as the king himself, were in mourning dresses, which they had worn from the time of the prince's disappearance, when he presented himself before them. His father received him with the most tender embraces, shedding tears of joy and surprise; he immediately inquired, with visible anxiety, what was become of the Indian's horse.

This question afforded the prince an opportunity of relating to the king all the dangers and perils he had encountered, after the horse rose with him in the air. He told him how he had escaped by alighting on the palace of the princess of Bengal, and the friendly reception he had met with from her. He did not conceal the motives which had induced him to prolong his residence with her for a longer period than was proper, had he consulted his duty alone; and enlarged on the desire she had shown in every instance to oblige him, so far as even to consent to accompany him into Persia, after he had given her his solemn promise to marry her. "And sire," continued the prince, as he finished this account, "I at the same time assured her of your consent to our union, and I have brought her with me on the Indian's horse. I left her, in one of the palaces belonging to your majesty, where she is anxiously waiting my return, to announce to her that I have not made a promise unworthy of myself or you."

At these words the prince was about to prostrate himself at the feet of the king his father, to prevail on him to grant his request, but the king prevented him, and embracing him a second time: "My son," said he, "I not only give my consent to your marrying the princess of Bengal, but I will go to her myself, and thank her in person for the obligations I am under to her, and conduct her to my palace, where your nuptials shall be celebrated this very day." The king having then given orders to prepare for the arrival of the princess of Bengal, commanded the mourning to be discontinued, and that public rejoicings should immediately commence, by the sound of drums, trumpets, and other warlike instruments; after which he desired the Indian to be released from prison, and conducted before him.

His orders were instantly obeyed; and when the Indian was presented to him, he said to him, "I had secured your person, that your life, which would scarcely have been a victim adequate either to my grief or my rage, might have atoned for that of the prince my son. Return thanks to Heaven for having restored him to me. Go, take your horse, and never appear again before my sight."

When the Indian had left the presence of the king of Persia, he learned of those who had released him from prison, that Prince Firouz Schah was returned with a princess, whom he brought with him on the enchanted horse; he was also told where he had alighted and left the princess, and that the sultan was preparing to go to her, and conduct her to his palace. The Indian did not hesitate to take advantage of this intelligence, and without losing a moment's time, he repaired to the country palace with so much diligence, that he reached it before the king and the prince of Persia; addressing himself to the steward of the palace, he told him that he was come by order of the king and the prince of Persia, to conduct the princess of Bengal on the enchanted horse through the air to the king, who, he said, was waiting to receive her in the great square before his palace, that his whole court and the people of Schiraz might witness the spectacle.

The steward knew the Indian, and was also acquainted with his arrest and

imprisonment; seeing him therefore at liberty, he believed him without any difficulty. He presented him to the princess, who was no sooner told that he came by order of the prince of Persia, than she consented to do what she was persuaded was his wish. The Indian, delighted with the success of his wicked scheme, mounted the horse, and took the princess behind him by the assistance of the steward; he turned the peg, and instantly the horse rose with him and the princess to an immense height in the air.

At this instant the king of Persia, accompanied by his whole court, was going out of his palace, to repair to that in which the princess had been left, Prince Firouz preceding him, that he might arrive first, and prepare the princess for his reception. The Indian, in order to brave the anger of the king and the prince, and revenge himself for what he conceived the unjust treatment he had experienced, passed over the city with his victim, in full view of those who were assembled on the occasion.

When the king perceived the ravisher, whom he could not mistake, he immediately stopped at a sight which created in his breast the most poignant and afflicting sensations, and which were still heightened by the reflection, that it would not be possible to make him repent of the flagrant affront he thus publicly offered to his dignity. He uttered a thousand imprecations on him to his courtiers and all who were spectators of this signal insult and unparalleled wickedness. The Indian was not much affected by all these maledictions, which he distinctly heard as he pursued his course through the air, and the king was at length obliged to return to his palace, bitterly mortified at the injury he had sustained, and at the utter impossibility he felt of punishing the author of it.

But the grief of Prince Firouz Schah cannot be described, when he beheld the Indian ravishing from him his adored princess, who was the only hope of his life, without being able to rescue her from his power. At this unexpected sight he remained motionless; and whilst he was deliberating whether he should vent his despair in reproaches on the perfidy of the Indian, or pity the deplorable fate of the princess, and ask her forgiveness for the little precaution he had used towards her, who had so fully proved the sincerity of her love by resigning herself entirely to his care, the horse continued his progress with inconceivable rapidity, and soon bore them both far out of his view. He knew not what course to adopt. Should he return to the palace of his father, shut himself up in his apartment to give loose to his affliction, and resign all intention of pursuing the ravisher, to deliver the princess from his hands, and punish him as he deserved? His generosity, his courage, his love forbid it. Immersed in thought, he bent his way towards the country palace where the princess had been left.

On the appearance of the prince, the steward, who was by this time aware of his unreasonable credulity, and that he had been deceived by the Indian, presented himself before him with tears in his eyes, and throwing himself at his feet, began his own accusation of the crime he confessed he had committed, and condemned himself to death, which he awaited from the prince's hand.

"Rise," said the prince to him. "I do not impute the loss of my princess to you; I impute it alone to my own thoughtless imprudence. Lose no time, but go instantly to procure me the dress of a dervise, and be careful not to let it be suspected that it is for me."

At a little distance from the country palace, there was a convent belonging to some dervises, the scheik, or superior of which was a friend of the steward. He therefore went to him, and pretending to intrust him with a profound secret, acquainted him that an officer of considerable distinction at court, to whom he was under great obligations, had incurred the displeasure of the king, and that

he wished to give him an opportunity of escaping his sovereign's revenge. The steward easily obtained what he required, and returned to the prince with the complete dress of a dervise. Firouz having taken off his own, put it on, and being thus disguised, he took with him a box of pearls and diamonds, which he had previously provided as a present for the princess of Bengal, to defray the expenses of the journey he was going to undertake, and left the country palace at the approach of night, uncertain what road to travel, yet fully resolved not to return until he had found, and again obtained possession of his princess.

We will now return to the Indian, who directed the course of the enchanted horse so successfully, that he arrived on the same day at an early hour in a wood, adjoining the capital of the kingdom of Cashmire. As he began to feel the impulse of hunger, and supposed that the princess might also be in the same situation, he dismounted in this wood, on an open lawn, where he left the princess near a little stream of cool, transparent water.

During the absence of the Indian, the princess of Bengal, who now found herself in the possession of a worthless ravisher, whose brutal violence she justly dreaded, conceived the project of making her escape, and seeking some asylum from his power; but as she had eaten a very slight meal that morning, on her arrival at the country palace of the king of Persia, she found herself so weak, that she was obliged to relinquish her design of concealing herself, and had therefore no other resource than courage and fortitude, resolving to suffer death rather than be faithless to Prince Firouz Schah. She did not therefore wait for the Indian to give her a second invitation to partake of what he placed before her; she ate, and soon recovered her strength sufficiently to be able to answer with courage and firmness the insolent speeches which he addressed to her towards the end of the repast. After uttering several menaces, as she perceived the Indian was preparing to offer violence to her person, she rose to resist him, uttering at the same time loud and repeated cries. Her shrieks immediately drew to the spot a body of horsemen, who surrounded both her and the Indian.

These were the sultan of Cashmire and his attendants, who were returning from hunting, and, fortunately for the princess of Bengal, passed that way, and were attracted by the sounds they had heard. The sultan addressed himself to the Indian, demanded his name, and what he was doing to the lady who was with him. The Indian boldly replied that she was his wife, and no one had any right to interfere with the difference that existed between them.

The princess, who was ignorant of the rank and quality of the person who so opportunely presented himself for her deliverance, contradicted the Indian's assertion. "Sir," said she, "whoever you may be, whom Heaven sends to my relief, have pity on a princess, and do not give credit to the words of an impostor. God preserve me from ever being the wife of so worthless and contemptible a wretch. He is a wicked magician, who has this day forcibly carried me away from the prince of Persia, to whom I was betrothed, and has brought me hither on this enchanted horse."

The princess of Bengal had no occasion to use any longer arguments to convince the sultan of Cashmire that she spoke truth. Her beauty, her majestic demeanour, and her tears, were powerful advocates in her favour; she was going to proceed, but instead of listening to her, the sultan, justly irritated by the insolence of the Indian, ordered his attendants to surround him, and to cut off his head without delay. This order was executed with less difficulty, as the Indian had carried off the princess immediately after his release from prison, and had therefore no arms about him for defence.

The princess being thus delivered from the persecution of her cruel enemy, was destined to undergo another, not less afflicting to her feelings. The sultan,

having ordered her a horse, conducted her to his palace, where he allotted for her use the most magnificent apartment it contained, excepting that which he himself inhabited, and gave her a number of female slaves to attend upon and serve her, and some eunuchs as her guard. He led her himself to this apartment, and without allowing her time to thank him for the obligation he had conferred on her, in the terms she had meditated, he said to her, "Princess, I doubt not that you must be in want of rest, I therefore leave you to repose; to-morrow you will be better able to relate to me the circumstances of the singular adventure that has befallen you." As he spoke these words, he retired.

The princess of Bengal felt inexpressible satisfaction at finding herself delivered from the hateful persecutions of a man, whom she could not regard but with horror and disgust; and she flattered herself that the sultan of Cashmire would complete the generous action he had begun, by sending her back to the prince of Persia, after she had informed him in what manner she was affianced to him, and had requested him to confer this favour on her. But she was very far from experiencing the accomplishment of that which her delusive hopes had held in view.

In fact, the sultan of Cashmire had determined to marry her on the following day; and he had ordered the usual rejoicings to be announced at the break of day, by trumpets, kettle-drums, and other instruments, calculated to inspire mirth and joy, which resounded not only in the palace, but throughout the city. The princess was awakened by these tumultuous sounds, and little suspected the true cause of the noise that disturbed her rest. But when the sultan, who had desired to be informed when she would be ready to receive his visit, had paid his compliments and inquired after her health, and begun to acquaint her, that the trumpets were flourishing in honour of the nuptials which were to be solemnised, and to which he hoped she would not object, she was in such embarrassment and consternation that she fainted away.

The princess's women who were present ran to her assistance, and the sultan also exerted himself to restore her to life; but she remained a considerable time in this state. At length, she began to recover; but being determined to perish rather than be faithless to Prince Firouz Schah by consenting to the marriage, which the sultan had intended without even consulting her, she pretended that her senses were fled with the fainting fit. She immediately began to say the most extravagant things to the sultan, and even got up to attack his person. This sudden change surprised and afflicted him beyond expression. As he found she continued in the same state of insanity, he left her with her attendants, whom he desired to pay her every attention, and take the greatest care of her. During the course of the day, he sent frequently to inquire after her health, and every time was told, either that she continued in the same way, or that the disease increased rather than diminished. Towards evening she grew much worse, so that the sultan of Cashmire did not pass that night so happily as he had expected.

Not only on the following day, but every succeeding one, the princess of Bengal continued to show strong symptoms, both by her conversation and actions, of a disordered mind; the sultan, therefore, was at last reduced to the necessity of assembling the physicians belonging to the court, to inform them of this unfortunate malady, and ask them if they knew of any remedies that would effect a cure.

The physicians, after having had a consultation among themselves, agreed in one common reply, that there were several kinds and degrees of this malady, some of which, according to their nature, might be overcome, and that others were incurable; and that they could not judge of what class the disorder of the princess of Bengal might be, if they did not see her. The sultan then ordered

the eunuchs to conduct the physicians into the chamber of the princess, one at a time, according to their rank.

The princess, who had foreseen this consequence, and was apprehensive that if she suffered the physicians to approach her, and feel her pulse, the most inexperienced of them would soon discover that she was in perfect health, and that her insanity was only feigned, as soon as they made their appearance, began to show such violent marks of aversion, endeavouring to tear their faces if they came near, that not one had the courage to expose himself to her fury.

Some, who pretended more profound skill in their profession than the rest, and boasted of being able to judge of diseases by only seeing the patient, ordered her certain potions, which she had the less difficulty in swallowing, as she well knew that it was in her own power to continue her dissembled madness as long as she pleased and should find it answer her purpose, and that these remedies could not do her any material injury.

When the sultan of Cashmire found that the physicians belonging to the palace did not effect a cure, he employed those who practised in the city, and were most celebrated for their skill and experience; but they were not more successful. He then sent for such as were renowned for a perfect knowledge of their profession in the different cities and towns in his kingdom; but the princess did not give them a better reception than she had done to the first who presented themselves; and all their prescriptions failed of their effect. At length the sultan despatched messengers to all the neighbouring courts and states, with formal consultations to be distributed to the most famous physicians in each, and a promise of paying the expenses of the journey to such as would repair to the capital of Cashmire; and of a princely recompense to him who should complete the cure of the princess. Several physicians undertook the journey, but not one could boast of being more successful than those who had first applied, and of effecting the recovery of the princess—an event which did not depend either on them or their skill, but which was entirely in the power of the princess herself.

During this interval, Prince Firouz Schah, disguised under the habit of a dervise, had traversed several provinces, and visited the principal cities in each province, in search of his beloved princess. The bodily fatigue he endured was still increased by the affliction of his mind, as he was uncertain whether he might not be travelling in a course directly opposed to that which he ought to have taken, to obtain the information he sought.

Attending earnestly to the passing news of the day in each place he visited, he at length arrived at a large city in the Indies, where the general conversation seemed to turn on a princess of Bengal, who had lost her senses on the very day which the sultan of Cashmire had appointed for the celebration of his nuptials with her. The name of the princess of Bengal attracted his notice; and concluding she must be the person he was in search of, which was in his idea the more probable, from his not having heard of there being any other princess at the court of Bengal, except the one who was betrothed to him, he determined, on the slight information he could obtain concerning her, to bend his way immediately to the capital of the kingdom of Cashmire. On his arrival in this city he took up his abode in a khan, where he learnt on that very day the whole history of the princess of Bengal, and of the deservedly tragical end of the criminal Indian, who had brought her on the enchanted horse. The latter circumstance fully convinced him that this was the princess he so anxiously endeavoured to find, and that the sums the sultan expended for her recovery were useless, as he did not doubt her madness to be feigned.

The prince of Persia having obtained all the necessary information on these various circumstances, ordered a physician's dress to be made for him on the

next day; and thus disguised, with the long beard he had suffered to grow during his journey, he was supposed to be of that profession as he walked along the streets. The impatience he felt to see his princess would not allow him to defer his appearance at the palace of the sultan, where he asked to speak to one of the officers. He was conducted to the chief of the ushers, and addressing himself to him, he said that it might possibly be considered as great temerity in him to present himself as a physician, who wished to attempt the cure of the princess, after so many had tried without success; but that he flattered himself, by means of certain specific remedies, the efficacy of which he had experienced, to complete what had hitherto been attempted in vain. The chief of the officers told him he was welcome, and that the sultan would receive him with pleasure; and if he could succeed in procuring him the satisfaction of seeing the princess in perfect health, he might rely on receiving a recompense suitable to the liberality of the sultan his lord and sovereign. "Wait for me here," added he; "I will be with you in a moment."

Some time had elapsed without any physician presenting himself; and the sultan of Cashmire, with inexpressible sorrow, found himself deprived of all hopes of seeing the princess in the same state as when he first beheld her, and of proving to her the excess of his love by the nuptials he was so desirous to solemnize. When the officer therefore announced to him the arrival of another physician, he ordered him to be immediately conducted before him.

The prince of Persia was presented to the sultan of Cashmire under the disguise and appearance of a physician; and the sultan, without wasting any time in superfluous conversation, acquainted him with the disorder of the princess of Bengal, and that she could not endure the sight of a physician without a return of such violent fits of insanity as seemed to augment her disease. He then took the prince into a little closet or balcony, which looked into her apartment, from whence he could see through the lattice without being perceived.

When Prince Firouz Schah was in the closet, he beheld his beloved princess seated in a negligent posture, and singing, with tears in her eyes, a song in which she deplored her unhappy destiny, which perhaps would deprive her for ever of the object she so tenderly loved. The prince, moved with compassion at the unhappy situation in which he found his princess, wanted no other proof to convince him that her derangement was only feigned, and that she endured this afflicting restraint solely on his account. He went down from the closet, and after having told the sultan the nature of the princess's disorder, and that it was not incurable, he added, that to perform a cure it would be necessary for him to converse with her alone, and without any witness; and that so far from showing the violent symptoms she had hitherto given of her insanity when any medical person approached her, he flattered himself that she would receive and listen to him with calmness.

The sultan ordered the door of the princess's chamber to be opened, and Prince Firouz Schah entered it. No sooner had the princess perceived him, than taking him for a physician from the dress he wore, she rose from her seat in a rage, using the most threatening and abusive language. This did not prevent him from approaching her; and when he was advanced near enough to be heard, as he wished what he uttered to be for her ear alone, he said to her, in a low tone of voice and a respectful air, to render his assertion more credible, "Princess, I am not a physician; recognise in me the prince of Persia, who is come to restore you to liberty."

At the sound of his voice, and the features in the upper part of his face, which, notwithstanding the long beard the prince had suffered to grow, she recollected at the same instant, the princess of Bengal began to grow calm, and imme-

diately her countenance was brightened by the joy which what one most desires yet least expects, must create when it suddenly presents itself. The agreeable surprise she experienced for some time deprived her of utterance, and allowed Firouz Schah an opportunity of relating to her the despair in which he was plunged at the moment he saw the Indian ravishing her from him, even before his eyes; of the resolution he had immediately formed to abandon every other care, to wander in search of her to every quarter of the globe, and not to cease from his inquiries until he had found and wrested her from the power of so perfidious a wretch; he then told her by what a fortunate accident he had at length, after a painful and fatiguing journey, obtained the satisfaction of finding her in the palace of the sultan of Cashmire. When he had concluded his narration, in as concise a manner as he could express himself, he begged the princess to acquaint him of what had passed from the time of her ravishment to the period when he was enjoying the happiness of speaking to her, saying, that it was necessary he should be fully informed of the whole, that he might take proper measures for releasing her from the tyrannous power of the sultan.

The princess of Bengal did not use many words in her account of herself to the prince of Persia, since she had only to relate in what manner she had been delivered from the violence of the Indian by the sultan of Cashmire, as he was returning from the chase; but that she had been cruelly treated on the following day by the unexpected declaration he made her, of his solemn intention to marry her on that very day, without having previously shown her any attention that could incline her heart towards him;—a conduct so violent and tyrannical, that it instantly caused her to faint away, on her recovery from which, she saw no mode to adopt, excepting that which she had hitherto pursued, as the most likely to preserve her affections unmolested for a prince to whom she had pledged her heart and her faith; and that had this scheme failed, she had resolved to die, rather than resign herself to the sultan, whom she neither did nor ever could love.

The princess had nothing more to add, and Firouz Schah inquired if she knew what became of the enchanted horse after the death of the Indian. "I am ignorant," replied she, "of what orders the sultan may have given concerning it, but after the wonders I related of it, it is not probable that he neglected to appropriate it to himself."

As Prince Firouz Schah did not doubt that the sultan of Cashmire had carefully preserved the horse, he communicated to the princess his design of using it to convey her back again to Persia; and then consulting her on the measures proper to be pursued for the execution of their design, that nothing might impede its success, they agreed that on the following day the princess should dress herself in more elegant attire than she was then in, to receive the sultan with greater marks of distinction, when Firouz Schah should conduct him to her apartment, nevertheless still preserving her usual silence before him.

The sultan expressed great pleasure when the prince of Persia related to him how far his first visit to the princess had operated towards her recovery; and when, on the succeeding day, the princess received him in a manner which convinced him that the cure was rapidly advancing, he considered him as the first physician in the universe. Seeing her in this state, he told her how delighted he was at observing such indications of returning health; and, after having exhorted her to attend implicitly to the directions of so able a physician, that what he had so well begun might terminate successfully, he retired, without waiting for any answer from her.

As the prince of Persia had accompanied the sultan to the princess's apartment, he left it also when he did; and as he went along with him, he asked him if he

might, without being deficient in the respect due to him, inquire by what adventure a princess of Bengal happened to be in the kingdom of Cashmire, so far distant from her own dominions, without any of her family attendants. He asked this question, as if he had been totally ignorant of the whole, that he might lead the conversation to the subject of the enchanted horse, and learn from the sultan's lips what was become of it.

The sultan, who could not penetrate into the motive that induced the pretended physician to make this inquiry, did not make any mystery of the affair; he repeated to him nearly the same thing with which the princess of Bengal had previously made him acquainted, adding, that he had ordered the enchanted horse to be conveyed into his treasury, although he was ignorant of the secret by which it could be used.

"Sire," replied the pretended physician, "the information which your majesty has now imparted to me, will furnish me with a method of completing the recovery of the princess. As she was brought here on this horse, which you say is enchanted, she has contracted something of that enchantment, which can only be dissipated by certain perfumes that I am acquainted with. If your majesty chooses to enjoy, and present to your court and the inhabitants of your capital, one of the most surprising spectacles that can be exhibited, you have only to order the horse to be brought into the middle of the square before your palace, and depend upon me for the rest; I promise to show you and the whole assembly, in a few moments, the princess of Bengal in as perfect health, both mental and corporeal, as she ever enjoyed in her life: and that this may be effected with all the pomp such an event requires, it is advisable that the princess should be dressed as magnificently as possible, and decorated with all the most precious jewels your majesty is possessed of." The sultan had no difficulty in consenting to do everything the prince proposed, and would have agreed to comply even with more extravagant demands to obtain the gratification of his desires, which he now considered as so near completion.

On the following day, the enchanted horse was by his orders taken out of the treasury, and at an early hour placed in the great square of the palace. The report was soon circulated throughout the city, that preparations were making for something extraordinary that was to be exhibited there, and a crowd of spectators assembled from all quarters. The guards belonging to the sultan ranged round the square to prevent any disorder, and to keep an open space near the horse.

The sultan of Cashmire made his appearance, and when he had taken his place on a building erected for that purpose, surrounded by the principal nobles and officers of his court, the princess of Bengal, accompanied by the whole train of females which the sultan had assigned her, approached the enchanted horse, and, with the assistance of her attendants, mounted it. When she was on the saddle, her feet in each stirrup, and the bridle in her hand, the pretended physician placed round the horse several little vessels full of fire, which he had ordered to be brought, and going to each, he threw in a perfume composed of a variety of the most exquisite odours. After this, assuming a thoughtful air, and with eyes fixed on the ground, and his hands placed on his breast, he went three times round the horse, pretending to pronounce certain words; and, at the instant that the vessels all emitted a thick smoke of a delicious fragrance, and that the princess was so enveloped in the fumes as with the horse to be scarcely discernible, Firouz Schah availed himself of that opportunity, and lightly bounding on it behind the princess, he bent forward to turn the peg which was to make the horse depart; and while ascending with the princess into the air, he pronounced the following words in a loud voice, and so distinctly that the sultan himself heard them:—"Sultan of Cashmire, when you

wish to espouse princesses who implore your protection, learn first to obtain their consent."

It was by this stratagem that the prince of Persia delivered the princess of Bengal from her confinement, and conducted her on the same day, in a very short space of time, to the capital of Persia; but instead of alighting at the country palace, as he had previously done, he went into the middle of the palace, opposite to the king's apartment, where he dismounted. The king of Persia did not defer the solemnization of the nuptials longer than was requisite to make the necessary preparations for the ceremony to be performed with the utmost pomp and magnificence, and thus proved his entire concurrence with the marriage.

When the number of days allotted for the rejoicing and festivities was elapsed, the king's first care was to order and despatch a sumptuous embassy to the king of Bengal, to inform him of what had taken place, and to request his approbation and ratification of the alliance that he had formed with him by these nuptials, which the king of Bengal, when informed of all the circumstances, was proud and happy to agree to.

The sultana Scheherazadé, having thus related the history of the enchanted horse, went on, with the sultan's consent, with the story of the prince Ahmed and the fairy Pari-Banou, which she thus began :

THE HISTORY OF PRINCE AHMED AND THE FAIRY PARI-BANOÛ.

A SULTAN, who was one of your majesty's predecessors, and who reigned in peace on the throne of India during many years, had the satisfaction of seeing, in his old age, that the three princes his sons, the worthy imitators of his virtues, and a princess, his niece, were the ornaments of his court. The eldest of the princes was called Houssain, the second Ali, the youngest Ahmed, and the princess his niece Nourounnihar.

The princess Nourounnihar was the daughter of a prince, who was the younger brother of the sultan, and on whom he had settled a considerable fortune; he died, however, a few years after his marriage, and left her very young. The sultan, in consideration of that perfect brotherly affection which subsisted between them, and the sincere attachment the prince had always shown to his person, took charge of his daughter's education, and ordered her to be brought up in the palace with the three princes. To the possession of uncommon beauty and every personal grace and accomplishment, this princess added an excellent understanding, and her unsullied virtue distinguished her among all the princesses of her time.

The sultan, her uncle, whose design was to marry her when she was of a proper age, and thus to form an alliance with some neighbouring prince, was seriously thinking on the subject, when he discovered that all the three princes his sons were desperately in love with her. This gave him great unhappiness; arising not so much because their attachment would prevent the alliance he had in contemplation, as from the difficulty he foresaw in effecting an agreement between them, so that the two younger, at least, should resign their claims to the eldest. He talked to each in private; and after remonstrating with them on the impossibility that one princess should be married to them all, and on the troubles they would occasion by persisting in their passion, he used every argument to persuade them, either to submit to the declaration which the princess herself should make in favour of one of the three, or to relinquish

their pretensions, and look out for some other connexion, in which he would allow them a free choice, and agree among themselves to consent to her marriage with some foreign prince. But as in each of them he met with unconquerable obstinacy, he assembled them all three before him, and thus addressed them: "My children," said he, "since, for the advantage and tranquillity of you all, I have not succeeded in persuading you to think no more about marrying the princess your cousin, and as I am not inclined to use my authority in giving her to one of you in preference to the other two, I think I have found out a way to satisfy you, and to preserve that union which ought to subsist among you, if you will attend to me, and do what I shall now recommend. I think it then advisable, that you should separately go upon your travels each into a different country, so that it shall be impossible for you to meet; and as you know I pay great attention to everything that is either curious, rare, or singular, I promise the princess my niece to him who shall bring me that rarity which is the most extraordinary, and of the most singular nature; thus as chance will direct your judgment in the choice of the singularity of the things you shall have brought by the comparison you will make among them, you will have no difficulty in doing one another justice, and giving the preference where it is due. To defray the expenses of travelling, and for the purchase of the rarity you are to procure, I will give each of you a sum suitable to your birth, but not enough to furnish a great equipage and a numerous retinue, which, by discovering your rank, would deprive you of that freedom which will be necessary to you, not only for accomplishing the purpose of your journey, but also for giving due attention to whatever is worthy of observation; and, in short, to derive the greatest possible advantage from your travels."

As the three princes always conformed themselves to the inclinations of the sultan their father, and as each flattered himself that he should be the person whom fortune would most favour, in giving him the possession of Nourounihar, they all testified their readiness to obey him without delay. The sultan immediately desired the sum he had promised to be paid them, and on that very day orders were given to make preparations for their journey; they even took leave of the sultan, that they might be in readiness to set off very early the next morning. They went out at the same gate of the city, well mounted and equipped, dressed like merchants, each with a confidential attendant, disguised like a slave; and they kept together till they arrived at the first inn, where the road separated into three, one of which each of them was to take by himself. At night, whilst they were refreshing themselves with the supper they had ordered, they agreed that they would be absent a year, and, after that time, meet again at the same place, upon this condition, that he who came first should wait for the other two, and that the two who came first should wait for the third; so that as they all three took leave of the sultan their father together, they should present themselves to him at the same time on their return. The next morning, at daybreak, after having embraced each other, and mutually wished one another an agreeable journey, they mounted their horses, and each took one of three roads, without at all clashing in their choice of them.

Prince Houssain, the eldest of the three, who had often heard of the great grandeur, strength, riches, and splendour of the kingdom of Bisnagar, took his route towards the Indian sea; and, after a journey of three months, by occasionally joining himself to different caravans, and sometimes passing through barren deserts and mountainous tracts; at others travelling through a country as well peopled, more fruitful, and better cultivated than any other part of the world, he at last arrived at Bisnagar, a city which gives its own name to the whole country, of which it is the capital, and where the usual residence of its sovereigns is fixed. He took up his lodgings in a khan appropriated for the

reception of foreign merchants; and as he had learnt that there were four principal different divisions, where the merchants of all descriptions had shops for their goods, in the middle of which the palace of the king, occupying a large extent of ground, was placed, forming as it were the centre of the city, which had three enclosures, at least two leagues in length from one gate to the other, he went on the very next day to one of the three divisions.

Prince Houssain could not behold this part without great astonishment. It was of considerable extent, and filled with streets intersecting each other, all arched over to guard against the heat of the sun; they were, however, well lighted. The shops were perfectly regular, and those belonging to merchants who traded in different goods, were not mixed together, but each sort was collected into one street. This was also the case in those streets which were inhabited by artificers or workmen.

This multitude of shops, each filled with one kind of merchandise, such as the finest Indian linens of different kinds, some painted in the most brilliant colours, with figures, landscapes, trees, and flowers, all resembling nature; others with silk stuffs and brocades from Persia, China, and other places; some with porcelain from Japan and China, and also floor carpets of every size; all these so much surprised him, that he knew not how to take his eyes off them. But when he came to the shops belonging to the goldsmiths and jewellers—for these two trades were carried on by the same persons—he was almost in ecstasy at the sight of such a profusion of fine works in gold and silver, as well as completely dazzled by the brilliancy of the diamonds, pearls, rubies, emeralds, sapphires, and other precious stones, which were exposed for sale in such large quantities. But if he was so much struck with the riches collected in one part, he was much more so when he reflected upon what must be the wealth of the whole kingdom, as he knew, except with respect to the Brahmins and ministers of the idols, who professed a retired life, free from the vanity of the world, that there was not, through all its extent, either male or female who had not collars, bracelets, or other ornaments for the feet and arms, made of pearls or other jewels, and which produced the greater effect as the wearers were entirely black, a colour which set off these ornaments to great advantage.

Another peculiarity that very much attracted the attention of Prince Houssain, was the multitude of people he saw who sold roses, and who, from their numbers, absolutely crowded the streets. He perceived that the Indians must be very fond of this flower, as he had not met one who did not either carry one in his hand or bind a wreath round his head; nor observe a merchant who had not several vases filled with them in his shop; so much so, that this division, extensive as it was, was entirely perfumed by them.

After having walked through every street in this quarter, meditating upon the immense quantity of riches that he saw, Prince Houssain felt himself in want of some repose. He expressed his wishes to a merchant, who very civilly invited him to come in and rest in his shop. The prince accepted the offer, and had not been long sitting there before he saw a crier going about with a carpet about six feet square in his hand, which he offered to put up for sale at thirty purses. He called the crier, and desired to see this carpet, as it seemed to him to be a most exorbitant price for it, both on account of its size and its quality. When he had thoroughly examined the carpet, he said to the crier, that he could not comprehend the reason why a floor carpet, so small and indifferently made, should be put up at so high a price.

The crier, who took Prince Houssain for a merchant, replied, "If this sum, sir, appears to you to be unreasonable, you will be more astonished when I shall inform you that I am ordered not to let it go under forty purses, and not to deliver it till the money is paid." "There must, then," replied Prince Houssain,

"be some secret quality that renders it so valuable." "You have guessed it, sir," added the crier; "and you will agree to it when you are informed, that only by sitting upon this carpet you will be instantly transported, together with the carpet itself, to whatever place you wish to go; and you will find yourself in that spot, almost in a moment, without being stopped by any obstacle whatever."

The prince of India, reflecting that the principal object of his journey was to procure some extraordinary and unknown rarity for the sultan his father, thought that he could not possibly meet with anything with which the sultan could be better pleased. "If this carpet," he said to the crier, "has the power you say it possesses, I not only do not think it dear, but I will give you the forty purses you require, and will also make you such a present as shall amply satisfy you." "Sir," replied the crier, "I assure you I have told you the truth; and it will be very easy for you to be convinced of it, for as soon as you shall have determined on the purchase at forty purses, I will show you how to make the experiment. As you probably have not the forty purses here, and as I must accompany you to the khan, where, as a stranger, you have taken up your abode, in order to receive them, if the master of this shop will give us leave, we will retire into the back part of it; I will there spread out my carpet, and when we shall be both seated upon it, and you shall have formed the wish to be transported into your apartment with me, if we are not instantly conveyed there, it is no bargain, and you shall not be obliged to complete the purchase. With respect to the present, as it is the person who sells the carpet that pays me for my trouble, I shall receive it as a favour which you wish to bestow upon me, and shall feel myself under an obligation to you for it."

The prince believed the crier, and accepted the conditions. He concluded the bargain according to the terms proposed; he then, having obtained the owner's leave, went into the back part of the shop. The crier spread out the carpet, and they both seated themselves upon it. The prince had no sooner formed the wish to be transported to his apartment in the khan, than he found himself and the crier in the very spot. He had no need of any further proof of the virtue of the carpet; he therefore counted out to the crier the forty purses in gold, and added twenty pieces more, as a present for himself.

Prince Houssain's joy was extreme at having thus fortunately obtained, almost at the moment of his arrival at Bisnagar, possession of a carpet, the qualities of which were so rare, that he had not the least doubt but that he should obtain the princess Nourounihar. In fact he thought it impossible for either of his younger brothers to acquire anything in the course of their travels, that could at all be put in competition with what he had been so fortunate as to meet with. By only sitting down on the carpet, he might, without remaining any longer at Bisnagar, have instantly returned to the spot at which they had agreed to meet; but he would then have been obliged to have waited there a long time for them; and as he was desirous of seeing the king of Bisnagar and his court, and to inform himself of the strength, laws, customs, religion, and condition of the kingdom, he resolved to employ some months in endeavouring to satisfy his curiosity.

It was the custom of the king of Bisnagar to give an audience once every week to foreign merchants. It was under this character that Prince Houssain, who did not wish to discover his real rank, saw him very frequently. And as this prince, besides being handsome and well-made, possessed a brilliant understanding, and was master of great address and politeness, he was very much distinguished beyond the other merchants, with whom he came into the king's presence. To him, therefore, in preference to others, the king addressed his conversation when he wished to make inquiries about the sultan of India, and the strength, riches, and government of his empire.

On the other days, the prince employed himself in seeing whatever was most remarkable, either in the city or the neighbouring country. Among other things most worthy of being visited, he went to the temple of idols, a building the more curious in its construction, as it was entirely formed of bronze. It was not more than ten cubits square in the inside, and about fifteen high : but that which made it the most curious, was an idol of massive gold, as large as a man, the eyes of which were single rubies, and so artfully formed, that on whatever side the spectator stood, they appeared turned towards him. There was also another temple no less curious. This was situated in a village, where there was a plain of about ten acres in extent, which formed a delicious garden, filled with roses and other delightful flowers, the whole of which was surrounded by a wall about four feet high, for the purpose of keeping out any animals that came near. In the middle of this plain was a small terrace, raised to about the height of a man, formed of stones, joined together with so much care and skill that the whole looked like one single stone. The temple, which was in the form of a dome, and erected in the middle of the terrace, was fifty cubits high, and could be seen at the distance of several leagues each way. The length of it was thirty cubits on one side, and twenty on the other; and the marble of which it was formed was quite red, and very highly polished. The vault of the dome was ornamented with three rows of paintings, finely executed, and in good taste. All the other parts of the temple were also so completely filled with pictures, bas-reliefs, and idols, that there was no place from the top to the bottom left undecorated.

Every morning and evening there were some superstitious ceremonies performed here, which were followed by different games, instrumental concerts, dances, songs, and other festivities; and both the ministers belonging to the temple and the inhabitants of the palace, subsisted by the offerings which the pilgrims, who came in crowds from the most distant parts of the kingdom to fulfil their vows, brought with them.

Prince Houssain was also a spectator of a feast which is celebrated once a year at the court of Bisnagar, and to which the governors of provinces, the commanders of fortified places, the governors and judges of cities, the Brahmins, who are so celebrated for their tenets and learning, are all obliged to repair; although some of them live at such a distance, that their journey does not take them less than four months. The assembly, thus composed of an innumerable multitude of Indians, was held in a plain of vast extent, where they formed so immense a body, that the eye could scarcely take them all in at one. In the centre of this great plain, there was a particular part, of considerable extent, which was bounded on one side by a superb building, forming nine floors, or stories, like a scaffold, and supported upon forty columns. This was set apart for the king and his court, and for those strangers whom he honoured by giving them an audience every week. The inside was handsomely ornamented and richly furnished; and the outside covered with paintings in landscape, in which were depicted every sort of animal, birds, insects, even to flies and gnats, all most naturally executed. The other three sides were formed of other buildings, four or five stories high, and painted nearly alike. But what was most singular in these buildings, or scaffolds, was, that they could turn them, and change the different decorations from hour to hour.

On each side of this place, and at a little distance from each other, there were ranged a thousand elephants, all most richly caparisoned, and upon the back of each there was a square tower of gilt wood, containing musicians and buffoons. The trunks, ears, and other parts of these elephants, were painted red and other colours, representing the most grotesque figures.

But what made Prince Houssain most admire the industry, address, and

invention of these Indians was, to see one of the largest and most powerful of the elephants, standing with his feet placed upon the ends of four posts driven perpendicularly into the ground, and about two feet high, and tossing its trunk about in exact time with the instruments. Nor was he much less surprised at seeing another elephant not less powerful, standing on the end of a beam, placed across a post ten feet high, with an immense stone fastened to the other end, which served as a counterbalance to the animal; and thus sometimes rising into the air, and sometimes descending, he marked, in the presence of the king and all his court, by different motions of his body and trunk, the time and cadence of the music, as well as the other elephant. The way the Indians did this, was to draw down to the ground, by the power of men, one end of the beam, after they had fastened the stone as a balance on the other, and then make the elephant get upon it.

Prince Houssain had been enabled to make a very long stay at the court, and in the kingdom of Bisnagar. A variety of other curious things would have agreeably amused him there, until the very last day of the year, on which the princes his brothers and himself had agreed to meet. Fully satisfied, however, with what he had seen, and occupied continually with the thoughts of Nourounihar, the dear object of his affections, the recollections of whose beauty and charms, since the acquisition he had made of the carpet, every day augmented the violence of his passion, he fancied his mind would be much more at ease, and that he should feel much more happy, when he should be at a less distance from her. Having first therefore remunerated the master of the khan for the apartment he had occupied, and told him the hour when he might come for the key, which would be left in the door, without giving any hint by what mode he meant to travel, he went back to his room, shut the door, and left the key in it. He then spread out the carpet, and seated himself, with the attendant whom he had brought with him, upon it, and having meditated for a moment, he in the most serious manner formed the wish to be conveyed to the spot where he and his brothers had agreed to assemble; and he soon perceived that he was arrived. He took up his residence there, and without making himself known otherwise than as a merchant, he waited for their arrival.

Prince Ali, the younger brother of Houssain, who intended to travel to Persia, in order to comply with the wishes of the sultan his father, had set out for that country in company with a caravan, which he had joined on the third day after he had separated from his brothers; and after a journey of near four months, he at length arrived at Schiraz, which at that time was the capital of the kingdom of Persia. As he had formed a sort of intimacy during the journey with a few merchants, without letting them suppose he was anything else but a jeweller, he took up his abode at the same khan with them.

While the merchants were the next day unpacking their bales of merchandise, Prince Ali, who only travelled for his pleasure, and who was encumbered with nothing more than was absolutely necessary for his own comfort, having first changed his dress, desired some one to show him the quarter of the city where they sold jewels and gold and silver ornaments, brocades, silk stuffs, fine linens, and other curious and valuable merchandise. This place, which was very spacious and well built, was arched over, and the roof supported by large pillars, round which, as well as along the walls, the shops were all ranged, and also on both sides within and without, and this at Schiraz was called the *bezestein*. Prince Ali examined it in every part, and was astonished in attempting to judge of the quantity of riches that was shut up, from the profusion of rich and costly merchandise that was exposed for sale. Among the different criers who went about with specimens of various things for sale by way of auction, he was much surprised at seeing one who held an ivory tube in his hand, about a foot long,

and not more than an inch thick, which he put up at thirty purses. He imagined the crier could not be in his senses; but in order to be satisfied of the fact, he went up to a shop, and pointing the crier out to the merchant, he said, "Pray, sir, am I deceived in concluding that that crier, who puts up the little ivory tube he has in his hand at thirty purses, is insane?" "Sir," replied the merchant, "if it be so, he has lost his senses since yesterday. For I can assure you he is one of our best criers, and the most employed, as we place the greatest confidence in him, whenever there is anything to be sold of greater value than common. With respect to the ivory tube which he cries at thirty purses, it certainly must be worth so much, and even more, however extraordinary it may seem from its appearance. He will pass in a moment; we will then call him, and you may inform yourself of whatever you wish. Have the goodness in the mean time to sit down on my sofa, and rest yourself."

Prince Ali accepted the obliging offer of the merchant, and he had not long been seated before the crier passed by. The merchant immediately called him by his name, and when he came up, he pointed to Prince Ali, and said, "Inform this gentleman whether you are in your senses; as from your putting up that comparatively insignificant ivory tube at thirty purses, he has some doubts on the subject. I should myself also be much astonished at it, did I not know you to be a prudent, sensible man." "Sir," replied the crier, addressing himself to Prince Ali, "you are not the only person who supposes I have lost my senses, from my conduct respecting this ivory tube: but you shall yourself judge whether it be so when I have explained its properties to you: and I hope that you will then attend the sale, the same as the others, who had an equally bad opinion of me as you have."

"In the first place, sir," continued the crier, showing the tube to the prince, "you will have the goodness to observe that this tube is furnished with a glass at each end; and I must inform you, that by looking through one of these two glasses, whatever you may feel a wish to see, you will instantly behold." "I am at this moment ready to retract my opinion," cried the prince, "if you will prove the truth of what you have advanced." And as he held the tube in his hand, he examined it at both ends, and then added, "Show me the end through which I must look, that I may be convinced." The crier immediately did so, and the prince looked through, having previously formed a wish to see the sultan his father, whom he instantly beheld in perfect health, sitting on his throne in the midst of his council. Then as nothing after the sultan was dearer to him than the princess Nourounihar, he transferred his wish to her, and immediately beheld her seated at her toilet, surrounded by her women, and appearing in the most lively humour.

Prince Ali wanted nothing more to convince him that this tube was the most valuable and rare thing that existed, not only in the city of Schiraz, but throughout the whole world; and he thought that if he neglected to purchase it, he should never again meet with so extraordinary a thing, either at Schiraz or during his travels, if he spent ten years or more in the search. He then said to the crier, "I freely retract the bad opinion I had formed of your conduct; and I believe you will be fully satisfied of my sincerity, and the reparation I am ready to make you, when I inform you that I am willing to purchase your tube. As I should be sorry that any one else should possess it, tell me the exact price the owner has fixed upon it; and then without giving you the trouble of crying it any longer, or fatiguing yourself by going about with it, you have only to accompany me, and I will count the sum out to you." The crier assured him with an oath, that he was ordered not to let it go under forty purses; and if he had any doubts of the truth of what he said, he was ready to conduct him to the owner. The prince was satisfied with his word,

and carried him with him. When they had arrived at the khan where Prince Ali lodged, he counted out to him forty purses of gold, and thus remained in possession of the ivory tube.

When the prince had made this acquisition he experienced the greater joy, because he felt persuaded that the princes his brothers could have met with nothing so rare or so deserving of admiration, and that the princess Nourounihar would therefore be his reward for the fatigues he had undergone. He now gave himself no further trouble except to see and inform himself of what was going on at the court of Persia, but without discovering his real character; and also in seeing whatever might be curious and worthy of observation in and about Schiraz, until the cavarán with which he came was about to return to India. He had almost satisfied his curiosity when the caravan was ready to depart. The prince immediately joined it, and began his journey. No accident disturbed or retarded their progress, and without suffering any other inconvenience than the fatigue common to so long a journey, Prince Ali arrived in safety at the same place where his brother Houssain already was. These two remained together, expecting the arrival of Prince Ahmed.

This prince had bent his course towards Samarcand, and on the day after his arrival there, he pursued the same plan as his two brothers had done, and went to the bezestein. He had hardly entered the place before he saw a crier carrying an artificial apple in his hand, which he put up at thirty-five purses. Prince Ahmed stopped the crier. "Let me see this apple," he cried, "and tell me what particular excellence it possesses, that you should put it up at the very extraordinary price of thirty-five purses." The crier gave it into his hand that he might examine it. "Sir," he said, "this apple, if you only consider its external appearance, is of very little apparent value: but if you reflect upon its properties, and the great use we can make of it for the good of mankind, you must confess that it is beyond all price; and that he who possesses it, possesses a true treasure. In fact, sir, there is no disease, however painful or dangerous, whether fever, pleurisy, plague, or, in short, any disorder whatever, and even if the afflicted person is at the point of death, but it will cure; and the sufferer shall return to as perfect a state of health as if he had never been ill during his whole life. And this is effected by the easiest of all possible ways: it is simply to make the sick person smell at this apple."

"If the account you have been giving might be relied upon," replied Prince Ahmed, "this apple indeed possesses the most wonderful property, and you may truly say it is invaluable; but can I, who really wish to make a purchase of it, be convinced that there is neither prevarication nor exaggeration in what you have been relating to me?" "Sir," replied the crier, "the fact is known, and can be vouched for by the whole city of Samarcand; and without going a step further, you have only to ask any of the merchants here, and you will hear what they will say on the subject. You will even find some that would not have been alive to-day, as they themselves will declare to you, if they had not made use of this excellent remedy. But to make you understand the thing better, I must inform you that it is the fruit of the study and long application of a very celebrated philosopher in this city, who has all his life applied himself to investigate the virtues of plants and minerals, and who has at length arrived at the knowledge of the composition you now see, by which he has performed the most surprising cures in this city, the recollection of which will never be obliterated. An attack so sudden, that he had not time to make use of this sovereign remedy, caused his death a short time since; and his widow, whom he has not left in the best of circumstances, and who has several young children, is resolved to put it up for sale, that she and her family may improve their situation."

While the crier was giving this account to the prince of the artificial apple, many people stopped and listened; and the most part of these confirmed everything he said. One of them having said that he had a friend who was so dangerously ill that he had given up all hopes of his life, and that this would be a favourable opportunity to try the power of the apple, Prince Ahmed told the crier that he would give him forty purses if the apple cured the sick person by only smelling at it. The crier, who had had orders to sell it at that price, replied, "Let us, sir, go and make the experiment, and the apple will be yours. I assert this with the greater confidence, because I cannot suppose it will have less efficacy now than it has hitherto possessed, every time it has been employed in recovering from the very jaws of death all those who have been in that state and tried its power."

The experiment succeeded, and the prince having counted out the forty purses to the crier, who delivered the apple to him, waited with the greatest impatience for the departure of the first caravan that should set out for India. He employed the intermediate time in examining whatever was most curious in Samarcand and the neighbouring country, particularly the valley of Soyda, thus called from a river of the same name, which waters it. This valley is reckoned by the Arabs as one of the four earthly paradises, from the beauty of the country, the gardens belonging to the palace, from its universal fertility, and the delightful enjoyments that are experienced in the fine season of the year.

Prince Ahmed, however, did not lose the opportunity of the very first caravan to return to India. He set out, and notwithstanding all the inevitable inconveniences of so long a journey, he arrived at the place where his brothers Houssain and Ali were waiting for him, in perfect health.

As Prince Ali had arrived some time before his brother Ahmed, he asked Prince Houssain, who was the first that had come there, how long he had been waiting for him. When he learnt that he had been there near three months, he said, "You cannot have been travelling very far." "I will tell you nothing at present," replied Houssain, "respecting the place where I have been, but I assure you I was more than three months on my journey thither." "If that is the case then," rejoined Prince Ali, "you must have made but a very short stay there." "You are in error, brother," said Houssain; "my residence there was for near five months, and it depended only upon my own choice to have made it much longer." "Then you certainly must have flown back," resumed Prince Ali; "I do not at all comprehend how you can otherwise have been there three months, as you wish to make me believe."

"I have nevertheless told you the truth," added Prince Houssain; "and this is an enigma which I will not explain to you until the arrival of our brother Ahmed, when I will at the same time inform you of the success of my travels respecting the object of our pursuit. I know not how successful you may have been in your search; perhaps it is not of any consequence, for I see your baggage is not much increased." "Well," answered Prince Ali, "with the exception of a trifling carpet which lies on your sofa, and which appears as if it belonged to you, I might return you the same compliment. But as you seem to make a mystery of the rarity you have procured, I also shall do the same with respect to mine."

"I esteem the extraordinary thing I have brought," replied Houssain, "so far beyond any other, whatever it may be, that I should make no difficulty in showing it to you, and making you instantly confess, without the least fear of contradiction, that it is infinitely superior to the one you may have procured; but it is proper that we should wait for Prince Ahmed, and then we may discover, with the greater kindness to each other, the good fortune we have each of us met with."

Prince Ali did not wish to enter more at length into the dispute with his brother concerning the preference which Houssain gave to the rarity he had himself procured; he was perfectly satisfied in his own mind, that if the ivory tube he had to show was not the most to be preferred, it at least could not be inferior; he therefore readily agreed to wait, before either of them was shown, for the arrival of Prince Ahmed.

When the latter rejoined the two princes his brothers, and they had mutually embraced and congratulated each other on their happy meeting, and had expressed the pleasure they received at seeing each other after their separation, Prince Houssain, being the eldest, began in these words:—"We shall have time enough hereafter to amuse each other with the particulars of our different travels; we will now only speak of what is of most importance for us to become acquainted with; and as I take it for granted that you as well as myself remember the principal business that occupied us, we will no longer conceal from each other what we have each obtained. And when we have all seen our acquisitions, we will determine in the first instance for ourselves, and see to whom the sultan our father is most likely to give the preference.

"And in order to set you the example," continued Prince Houssain, "I must inform you that the rarity I have procured in my travels into the kingdom of Bisnagar, is the carpet upon which I am sitting. It appears a common one, and without much show, as you may observe; but when I shall have told you its qualities, you will experience the greater astonishment, as you have never yet heard of anything similar; and I am sure you will agree with me. The fact is, that notwithstanding its common appearance, whoever sits upon this carpet as I now do, and wishes to be transported into any particular place, however distant it may be, will instantly find himself there. I convinced myself of it before I counted out the forty purses which it cost me, and which I do not in the least regret. And when I had satisfied my curiosity with seeing everything that was remarkable at court, and in the kingdom of Bisnagar, and wished to return, I made use of no other means of conveyance to bring me and my attendant hither than this wonderful carpet; and he can tell you how short a time we were on our journey. Whenever you wish it, I will give you both a proof of its power. I now wait to hear what you have brought that can be put in competition with my carpet."

Prince Houssain having finished what he had to say in praise of his carpet, Prince Ali spoke next, and addressed him in these terms: "I own, brother, that your carpet is one of the most wonderful things that can be, if, as I do not at all doubt, it possesses the property you have stated. But you must, however, acknowledge that there may be other things, I will not say more wonderful, but at least equally so as your carpet, although they may be of a different nature; and to convince you of it," he went on, "this ivory tube which I now show you, and which is not more valuable than your carpet in exterior, does not seem a rarity worthy of much attention. I have nevertheless not paid less for it than you did for your carpet, nor am I less satisfied with my purchase than you are with yours. Confident, however, as I am of your judgment and candour, you must acknowledge that I have not been mistaken, when you shall be told, and have had a convincing proof, that in looking through one end of this tube, you will behold whatever object you wish to see. I do not desire you to rely upon my word," added Prince Ali in presenting the tube; "take it, and see if I impose upon you."

Prince Houssain took the ivory tube from Ali, and as he put that end to his eye which his brother had pointed out, when he gave it to him, with the intention of seeing the princess Nourounihar, and of learning how she was, Prince Ali and his brother Ahmed, who had their eyes fixed upon him, were extremely astonished

at seeing him suddenly change countenance, as if he was not only very much surprised, but afflicted at the same time. Prince Houssain did not give them time to ask the cause of it. "Princes," he exclaimed, "we have in vain undertaken our painful journey, through the hopes of being rewarded with the possession of the charming Nourounihar; in a very few moments that amiable princess will be no more. I have seen her in her bed, surrounded by her women and eunuchs, who are all in tears, and who seem to expect nothing but to see her soul take its flight. Here, look yourselves; behold her pitiable state, and join your tears to mine."

Prince Ali took the tube from Houssain. He looked through it; and having with the most painful sensations beheld the same object, he presented it to Prince Ahmed, that he might also see the same melancholy and afflicting sight, so equally distressing to each of them.

When Prince Ahmed had received the ivory tube from Ali, had looked through it, and seen the princess so near the end of her life, he thus addressed the two princes his brothers: "The princess Nourounihar, my brothers, who is equally the object of our desires, is in a condition not far removed from death; but it seems to me, that if we lose no time she is still to be preserved from this fatal moment."

Prince Ahmed then drew from his bosom the artificial apple that he had purchased. "This apple," added he, showing it to the two princes, "which you now behold, is not less costly than the carpet and ivory tube, which each of you has brought home from your travels. The occasion that now presents itself to make you witnesses to its wonderful virtues, causes me not in the least to regret the forty purses which it cost me. Not to keep you any longer in suspense, I must inform you that it possesses the virtue, only by suffering a sick person to smell it, to restore him to perfect health, although he should be in his last agony. The experience I have had of it leaves it without a doubt in my mind, and you may now see the effect of it upon the person of the princess Nourounihar, if we hasten to her assistance."

"If this be the fact," exclaimed Prince Houssain, "we can make the greatest haste, and be transported in an instant into the chamber of the princess by means of my carpet. Let us, then, lose no time, but come and seat yourselves by my side; for it is large enough to hold us all without much inconvenience. Let us, however, in the first place, order our attendants to return immediately to the palace, where they will find us."

When they had done this, Prince Ali and Prince Ahmed seated themselves upon their carpet with their brother Houssain; and as they were all three equally interested in the same thing, they all instantly formed the same wish, of being transported into the apartment of Nourounihar. Their desires were fulfilled, and they were conveyed there so quickly that they seemed at the end of their journey almost before it had begun.

The sudden and unexpected presence of the three princes terrified the women and the eunuchs belonging to the princess, as they could not in the least comprehend how these men should so instantly appear in the midst of them. They did not at first recollect the princes, and the eunuchs were on the point of attacking them as persons who had penetrated to a place they were not permitted to approach; they soon however discovered their error, and recognised their persons.

Prince Ahmed no sooner perceived himself in the apartment of the princess, and discovered Nourounihar almost at the point of death, than he got up from the carpet, as did also the other two princes, and going up to the bed, he applied the wonderful apple to her nose. In a few moments the princess opened her eyes, turned her head round on each side, and looking at those

who stood near her, she raised herself in her bed, and desired to be dressed ; she did all this with the same ease and recollection as if she had just awakened from a long sleep. Her women immediately informed her that it was to the princes her cousins, and more particularly to Prince Ahmed, that she was indebted for so sudden and complete a recovery of her health. She expressed great pleasure at seeing them again, and thanked them all, more especially Prince Ahmed, for their goodness. As she had mentioned her intention of dressing herself, the princes were satisfied with only saying that they were extremely happy at having arrived at a time when they were enabled to contribute to her recovery from the imminent danger in which they had beheld her, and with expressing their most ardent vows for the long duration of her life ; they then immediately retired.

While Nourounihar was dressing, the princes went directly from her apartment, to throw themselves at the feet of the sultan their father, and pay him their respects. And when they came into his presence, they found that the principal eunuch of the princess had already been, and informed him of their unexpected arrival, and of the manner in which the princess had been by their means perfectly cured. The sultan received and embraced them with the greatest transport, and he experienced the greater joy at their return, because he was at the same instant informed of the perfect and wonderful recovery of the princess his niece, whom he loved as tenderly as if she had been his own daughter, and whom all the physicians had given over. After the mutual and common compliments and inquiries on such occasions, each of the princes presented the rarity that they had severally procured ; Prince Houssain, the carpet, which he had taken care to bring with him from the apartment of Nourounihar ; Prince Ali, the ivory tube ; and Prince Ahmed, the artificial apple. And after they had each spoken in praise of his own acquisition, they delivered them into the hands of the sultan, in the order of their age, and entreated him to declare to which he gave the preference, and thus to determine on which he bestowed, according to his promise, the princess Nourounihar in marriage.

The sultan of India, after having listened with the greatest attention and kindness to everything the princes wished to say in behalf of the rarities they brought, without giving them the least interruption, and having also been informed of everything that had passed respecting the cure of the princess, remained for some time silent, as if he were considering what answer he should make them. He at last broke silence, and addressed them in the following wise and sensible terms : " I would, my children, declare my opinion in favour of one of you with the greatest pleasure, if I could do so with justice ; but reflect in your own minds whether I can do so. It is indeed true that the princess my niece is indebted to you, Prince Ahmed, for her recovery by means of your artificial apple ; but I ask you, could it have been thus employed, had not the ivory tube of Prince Ali afforded you the opportunity of knowing the danger in which she was, and the carpet of Prince Houssain procured you the means of instantly coming to her assistance ? You, Prince Ali, by means of your ivory tube, discovered the irreparable loss that yourself and brothers were about to experience in the death of the princess your cousin, and it must therefore be acknowledged, that she is under a very great obligation to you ; but you must allow, that this information would have been inadequate to produce the advantage that has taken place without the artificial apple and the carpet. Nourounihar too, Prince Houssain, must be ungrateful, if she should be deficient in gratitude to you, on account of your carpet, which proved so necessary towards the accomplishment of her cure. But you must allow that it would not have been of the smallest use if you had not become acquainted

with her dangerous illness by means of Prince Ali's ivory tube, and if Prince Ahmed had not employed his artificial apple in the cure itself. Thus, then, as neither the carpet, the ivory tube, nor the artificial apple possess the least preference the one over the other, but appear equally rare and excellent, and I can bestow the princess Nourounnihar only upon one of you, you must yourselves be aware that the only advantage you have derived from your travels, is the glory of having equally contributed to the re-establishment of her health.

"If this be the fact," continued the sultan, "you see that it is necessary for me to have recourse to some other method to determine me in my choice, and to point out to me on whom I ought to bestow the princess; and as it is still some length of time before the night will approach, I wish this affair to be settled to-day. Let each of you then go and procure a bow and one arrow, and repair to the great plain without the walls, where the horses are exercised. I will prepare to go there myself; and I now declare, that I will give the princess Nourounnihar in marriage to him who shall shoot his arrow to the greatest distance. I have nothing more to add, but to thank every one of you, which I now do most cordially, for the present which you have each brought me. I have many rarities in my cabinet, but I possess nothing that equals in singularity or utility either the carpet, the ivory tube, or the artificial apple, with all of which I shall now enrich my collection. These are three things that will hold the first place, and I will preserve them there most carefully, not from curiosity only, but also for the purpose of making an advantageous use of them whenever proper occasions occur."

The three princes had nothing to say in reply to the decision which the sultan had pronounced. When they had left his presence, they each furnished themselves with a bow and arrow, which they gave to one of their attendants, who had all assembled as soon as they heard of their arrival; and they all repaired to the plain, followed by an innumerable crowd of people.

The sultan did not make them wait; and as soon as he was arrived, Prince Houssain, as being the eldest, took his bow and made the first shot. Prince Ali then drew his, and the arrow fell at some little distance beyond that of Houssain; Prince Ahmed shot the last, but the arrow went out of sight, and no one saw it fall. They ran and searched about, but, notwithstanding all the care and diligence of the surrounding people, and of Prince Ahmed himself, the arrow could nowhere, either far or near, be discovered. Although it was most probable that this arrow had been shot to a greater distance, and that he in consequence deserved the hand of the princess, yet, as it was quite necessary for the arrow to be found to render that fact quite certain, notwithstanding every remonstrance he could use with the sultan, the latter did not hesitate to determine in favour of Prince Ali. He therefore gave orders to have the preparations made to celebrate the nuptials, which were solemnized in a few days with the greatest magnificence.

Prince Houssain did not honour the festivities with his presence. As his affection for the princess was very sincere and strong, he had not sufficient fortitude of mind to bear patiently the mortification of beholding the object of his love in the arms of Prince Ali, who, as he thought, did not deserve her more, as his affection for her was not more perfect than his own. His displeasure and disappointment were, on the contrary, so great that he abandoned the court, renounced his right to the throne, assumed the habit of a dervise, and put himself under the direction of a very famous sheikh, who then enjoyed the highest reputation on account of his exemplary mode of life; and who had established his own residence, and that of his numerous disciples, in a pleasant solitude.

Prince Ahmed, actuated by the same motive as his brother Houssain, did not assist at the nuptials of Prince Ali and the princess Nourounnihar, but he did not, like him, renounce the world. As he could not comprehend how the arrow which he had shot could have thus become, as it were, invisible, he left his attendants, and resolved to go and search so carefully for it that he should at least have nothing to reproach himself with. He went therefore to the spot where the arrows of Princes Houssain and Ali had been found. From this place he walked on straight forward, looking both to the right and left as he went along. He at last found that he had got to so great a distance without discovering what he was in search of, that he thought he was now giving himself only a useless trouble. Led on, however, almost in spite of himself, he kept following the same direction till some very elevated rocks obliged him to turn on one side if he wished to proceed. These rocks, which were very steep, were situated in a barren place, about four leagues from the place whence he had set out.

In approaching these rocks the prince observed an arrow. He took it up, examined it, and was in the utmost astonishment at discovering it to be the very same that he had shot. "It certainly is the same," he exclaimed, "but neither I nor any other mortal could possibly have strength to send it to such a distance." And as he had found the arrow lying flat on the ground, not stuck in it by its point, he conjectured also that it must have struck against the rock, and had thus rebounded a little way back. "There must be," he added, "something very mysterious in so extraordinary a circumstance; and this mystery may be for my advantage. Fortune, perhaps, in having afflicted me by depriving me of the possession of what I thought would have formed the happiness of my life, has some greater blessing in store for me."

Meditating upon this subject, he entered into a hollow part of the rocks, which by their frequent projections formed numerous excavations of this sort; and as he cast his eyes from one part to another, he observed an iron door, which had no appearance of an opening. He feared it might be fastened; but by pushing against it he found it opened inwards, and he saw a gentle declivity, but no steps, by which he descended with the arrow in his hand. He naturally conjectured that he should be in perfect darkness, but he was immediately surrounded by a light, totally different from that he had left; and on entering a very spacious opening at the distance of fifty or sixty paces, he perceived a magnificent palace, the beautiful style of which he had not now time to admire, for at that very instant, a lady of most incomparable beauty and majestic air, adorned with the richest stuffs and most valuable jewels, but which were not at all necessary to increase her natural charms, advanced to the vestibule, accompanied by a band of females, among which he could easily distinguish her as their mistress.

Prince Ahmed had no sooner observed the lady than he hastened to go and pay his respects to her; while the lady, on her part, who saw him coming, prevented him, by first addressing these words to him, in an elevated tone of voice, "Approach, Prince Ahmed, you are welcome."

The prince was much surprised at hearing his own name in a country of which he himself had not the least knowledge, although it was so near the capital of his father; and he could not comprehend how he could be known to a lady of whom he was entirely ignorant. He accosted her by first throwing himself at her feet; and when he arose, "Madam," he replied, "I cannot but return you many thanks, on my arrival in a place where I was afraid that my curiosity had imprudently led me to penetrate too far, for the assurance you have given me that I am welcome. But, madam, may I be permitted to ask, without being guilty of an incivility, how it has happened that I am not,



as I have understood from yourself, unknown to you, while I myself have not till this moment the least knowledge of you, although you reside so near?" "Prince," replied the lady, "let us first go into the saloon: I can then answer your question when we are both more at our ease."

She had no sooner said this than she led the way into the saloon, and Prince Ahmed followed her. This room was of most singular structure, and the vault of the dome was decorated with gold and azure, which, with the inestimable value of the furniture, formed altogether so new and grand a sight, that the prince could not help expressing his admiration by exclaiming that he had never beheld anything similar, and could conceive nothing that could at all equal it. "I nevertheless assure you," replied the lady, "that this saloon is the least worth seeing in my whole palace, as you will yourself own, when I shall have shown you all the apartments." She went to the upper end and sat down on a sofa; and when Ahmed had taken his place by her side at her particular request, "Prince," said she, "you say that you are surprised that I should know who you are, although you are not at all acquainted with me; but your surprise will cease when I inform you who I am. You are doubtless not ignorant of a thing which your religion teaches you, which is, that the world is inhabited by Genii as well as mortals. I am the daughter of one of these Genii, who is the most powerful and distinguished of his race, and my name is Pari-Banou. You will therefore lay aside your astonishment at finding me acquainted with your name, as well as that of the sultan your father, the princes your brothers, and the princess Nourounnihar. I am acquainted with your affection for her, and also with your travels, of which I can inform you of all the circumstances, since I caused the artificial apple, which you bought at Samarcand, to be exposed for sale, as well as the carpet of Prince Houssain at Bhanagar, and the ivory tube of Prince Ali at Schiraz. This is sufficient to inform you that I am ignorant of nothing that relates to you. Let me only add one thing more, and that is, that you seem to me to be worthy of a better fate than to be united to the princess Nourounnihar; and in order that you should pursue that plan, as I was present when you shot the arrow you now have in your hand, and as I saw that it would not go even beyond Prince Houssain's, I seized it in the air, and gave it sufficient velocity to strike it against the rocks, near which you found it. It will now only depend upon yourself to take advantage of the opportunity which presents itself for you to become still more happy."

As the fairy Pari-Banou pronounced these last words in a different tone of voice, and cast a tender, yet modest look upon Prince Ahmed, then blushed, and instantly fixed her eyes on the ground, the prince had no difficulty in comprehending the sort of happiness she meant. He reflected that the princess Nourounnihar could never be his, and that the fairy Pari-Banou infinitely surpassed her as much in beauty and powers of attraction, as in the qualities of mind and immensity of riches, at least as far as he could judge from the magnificence of the palace where he was; and he blessed the moment, that the idea of going a second time to look for his arrow had struck him, and in having yielded to that inclination, which seemed to draw him towards the fresh object that had inflamed his heart. "If I might, madam," he replied, "become your slave, and have the power of contemplating and admiring so many charms for the remainder of my life, I should be the happiest of mortals. Pardon my boldness in making such a request; and do not, in refusing it, disdain to admit a prince who is entirely devoted to you within the circle of your court."

"I have been, prince," answered the fairy, "for a long time mistress of my own wishes and actions, through the kind consent of my parents. But it is not

as a slave that I wish to admit you into my court, but as the master of my person, and everything that belongs to me; and in pledging your faith to me, and accepting me as your wife, everything will become mutually our own. I trust that you will not form a bad opinion of me from my making this offer. I have already told you that I am mistress of my actions; and I must now add, that the custom among fairies is not the same as with women towards men; these never make any advances, and would esteem it a disgrace to do so: but as for us, we consider that they are obliged to us."

Prince Ahmed made no answer to this speech; penetrated with gratitude, he thought he could not show it better than by attempting to kiss the hem of her robe. But the fairy did not give him time; she presented her hand, on which he impressed a fervent kiss. "Prince Ahmed," said the fairy, while he held it, "will you not now pledge your faith to me, as I do mine most firmly to you?" "Ah! madam," exclaimed he, overcome with excess of joy, "how can I do otherwise—what can delight me more? Yès, my sultana, my queen, I give up my whole heart to you without the least reserve." "Then," replied Pari-Banou, "you are my husband, and I am now wholly yours. Marriages with us are contracted with no other ceremonies; yet they are more lasting and more indissoluble than amongst men, notwithstanding all the forms they make use of. In the mean time," continued the fairy, "while they are making the festive preparations for our nuptials this evening, as you seem to have taken nothing to-day, they shall bring us a slight repast, and I will then take you to see the different apartments of my palace, and you shall judge whether it be not true, as I have before said, that this saloon is one of the least beautiful."

Some of the attendants who had been in the saloon with her, and understood the intention of their mistress, went out, and in a short time after they brought in several dishes and some excellent wine.

When Prince Ahmed had eaten and drunk as much as he wished, Pari-Banou led him through all the different apartments, where he beheld diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and every sort of precious stone, mixed with pearls, agate, jasper, porphyry, and all the varieties of the most valuable marble, besides furniture of various descriptions and of inestimable value. All these rich materials were employed in so profuse a manner, that so far from having ever seen anything that resembled it, the prince candidly acknowledged to the fairy, that nothing in the whole world could equal it. "If, prince," said Pari-Banou, "you are so delighted with my palace, which, I own, possesses great beauties, what would you think of the palaces belonging to the chief of the Genii, which are still more rich, spacious, and magnificent. I must also take you to admire the beauty of my garden; but that shall serve for another time. Night approaches, and it is time to sit down to table."

The hall into which the fairy and Prince Ahmed went, and where the table was set out, was the last apartment that remained for him to see; and he found it not in the least inferior to all the others he had beheld. He was much struck, on entering, with an immense number of lights, all perfumed with amber; and they were arranged with so much symmetry, that it was a pleasure to look at them, from the total absence of everything like confusion. He admired also the large sideboard, covered with golden vases and other vessels, the workmanship of which rendered them still more valuable. Several groups of females, all superbly dressed and of great beauty, began a concert of vocal and instrumental music, the most harmonious ever heard. They sat down, and Pari-Banou was very attentive in helping Prince Ahmed to the most delicate things, all of which she named to him as she requested him to taste them; and as they consisted of what the prince had never before met with, he gave them all the

praise they deserved, and said, that the present feast surpassed all he had ever partaken of among mortals. He spoke in the same terms of the excellence of the wines, which both he and the fairy began to drink, when the dessert was served, which consisted of fruits, sweetmeats, and other things well suited to give a better flavour to the wine.

When the dessert was finished, Pari-Banou and Prince Ahmed rose from the table, which was instantly removed, and seated themselves more at their ease, on a sofa, furnished with cushions of rich silk stuff, delicately embroidered with large flowers, in various colours. At this instant a great many Genii and fairies entered the hall, and began a most surprising dance, which they continued till the fairy and the prince rose. The Genii and fairies still continuing to dance, then went out of the hall, and preceded the new-married pair, until they came to the door of the chamber where the nuptial bed was prepared. When they were arrived there, they ranged themselves in two ranks, to let the prince and fairy pass on; they then retired, and left them at liberty to go to rest.

The festive rejoicings of this marriage continued for several days, and Pari-Banou found no difficulty in diversifying the entertainments, by fresh preparations and fresh dishes, concerts and fresh dances, with a variety of spectacles, all so uncommon, that Prince Ahmed would never have been able even to have thought of them while living with mortals, had his life lasted a thousand years.

It was the intention of the fairy not only to give the prince the strongest proofs of the sincerity and excess of her love, but she wished him also to suppose that there was nothing at the court of the sultan his father, nor anywhere else, that could be put into competition with what was to be found with her, not to mention her own beauty and charms, and also that he would find nothing comparable to the happiness he would enjoy with her, in order that he might attach himself entirely to her, and never form a wish to leave her. She completely succeeded in her intentions; the affection of Prince Ahmed did not diminish by the possession of the object; it increased indeed to that degree, that it was no longer in his own power to control his love, even if he had resolved to conquer it.

At the end of six months, the prince, who had always felt a great regard and respect for the sultan his father, conceived a strong desire to learn some intelligence of him; and as he could not satisfy his anxiety but by going in person to obtain the information he wished, he spoke to Pari-Banou on the subject, and requested her leave to put it in execution. This speech much alarmed the fairy, who feared it might only be a pretence for abandoning her. "In what," she said to him, "have I given you cause for discontent, that you request this permission? Is it possible that you have forgotten that you have pledged your faith to me, and that you now no longer love me, who am still so passionately attached to you? You ought to be convinced of my love by the proofs I never cease from giving you."

"I am, my queen," replied Prince Ahmed, "completely convinced of your affection, of which I should be most unworthy, did I not show my gratitude by a love equally ardent. If you are offended at my request, I beg you will pardon me; and there is no reparation I am not willing to make. Yet I have surely done nothing that ought to displease you, for I have only been guided in it from my respect for the sultan my father, whom I should wish to relieve from the pain he must feel by my long absence. And his affliction is the greater, as I have reason to believe that he supposes me dead. But since you do not acquiesce in my affording him this consolation, I will act as you wish; for there is nothing in this world I am not ready to do to oblige you."

Prince Ahmed, who did not dissemble, and who loved Pari-Banou in his

heart, as perfectly as he had assured her by his words, ceased from urging his request, and the fairy showed how satisfied she was with his submission. Nevertheless, as he could not entirely abandon the design he had formed, he affected at different times to converse about the amiable and excellent qualities the sultan of India possessed, and especially the marks of affection he had shown for himself in particular. He did this with the hope that she would at last yield to his wishes.

Indeed Prince Ahmed judged rightly of the sultan his father; for in the midst of all the rejoicings on account of the nuptials of Prince Ali and the princess Nourounihar, he was most sensibly afflicted at the absence of his two sons. It was not long before he was informed of the plan Prince Housain had taken to abandon the world, and of the place he had chosen for his retreat. Like a good father who made a part of his happiness consist in the society of his own children, particularly when they were worthy of his affection, he had much rather they had remained at court, and attached themselves to his person. As he could not, however, disapprove of the choice he had made in endeavouring to make himself better and more holy, he bore his absence with fortitude. He made also every possible inquiry after Prince Ahmed; he sent courtiers into all the provinces of his dominions, with orders to the governors to detain him, and oblige him to return to his court; but all his cares were useless, as he had not the success he hoped for. His affliction, however, instead of lessening, daily increased. He often conversed on the subject with his grand vizier. "Vizier," he would say, "you know that of all the princes, Ahmed is the one whom I love the most tenderly; and you are not ignorant of the means I have taken to endeavour to discover him, but without success. The misery I feel is so strong, that I shall at length sink under it if you have not compassion upon me. If you have any interest in my preservation, I conjure you to assist me with your advice."

The grand vizier was not less attached to the person of his sovereign, than zealous to acquit himself with honour in his administration of the public affairs of the state; and in reflecting upon the different methods by which he endeavoured to lessen the affliction of his master, he remembered to have heard some extraordinary accounts of a celebrated enchantress. He proposed therefore to the sultan, to send for and consult her. The sultan consented, and the grand vizier, after inquiring where she was to be found, brought her with him.

The sultan addressed the enchantress as follows: "The affliction I have been in since the nuptials of my son, Prince Ali, with the princess Nourounihar, on account of the absence of Prince Ahmed, is so public and well known that you, without doubt, are not ignorant of it. Can you then, by your skill in magic, inform me what is become of him? whether he be still alive? where he is? what he is doing? and whether I may ever expect to see him again?" In order to answer all the questions of the sultan, the enchantress replied: "However skilful, sire, I may be in my profession, it is nevertheless impossible for me to satisfy your majesty immediately upon the subject of your inquiries; but if you will allow me till to-morrow, I will give your majesty an answer." The sultan granted her this delay, and dismissed her with the promise of recompensing her very handsomely, if her answer was at all adequate to his wishes.

The enchantress returned the next morning, and the grand vizier again presented her to the sultan. "Notwithstanding all the diligence I have exerted," said the enchantress, addressing herself to the sultan, "according to the rules of my art, in endeavouring to comply with your majesty's wishes, I have only been able to discover one thing; and that is, that Prince Ahmed is not dead.

Of this fact your majesty may rest assured. But I have been unable to find out in what place he is." The sultan of India was obliged to be satisfied with this answer, which left him nearly in the same distressing situation, respecting the fate of his son, as he was before.

Let us now return to Prince Ahmed. He so frequently turned the conversation he had with the fairy towards the sultan his father, though without again mentioning the desire he felt to see him, that this very forbearance made her comprehend his design. As she perceived, therefore, that he refrained from it through the fear he had of displeasing her, after the refusal he had before met with, she concluded that his love for her, of which he did not cease from giving her every possible mark, was very sincere; and then, judging by her own feelings of the injustice she displayed in thus violently opposing the natural affection of a son for his father, and in wishing him to annihilate so natural and so amiable a sentiment, she resolved to grant what she could not but perceive he so ardently desired.

She one day, therefore, said to him, "The permission, prince, which you requested of me to go and see your father, afforded me reasonable grounds to fear that it was only a mark of your inconstancy, and a pretext to abandon me; and I had no other motive than what arose from this circumstance in refusing your request; but as I am now as fully convinced from your actions as from your protestations that I can rely upon your constancy, and upon the strength and fervour of your affection, I have changed my opinion, and grant you the permission you formerly requested; but it must nevertheless be upon this condition—that you first promise me your absence shall not be long, but that you will return very soon. This condition ought not to give you any pain, as if I required it of you from distrust; that is not my motive, because I do not feel any, after the conviction you have afforded me of the sincerity of your love."

Prince Ahmed wished to throw himself at the feet of the fairy, to show how much he was penetrated with gratitude, but she prevented him. "My sultana," he exclaimed, "I know the value of the favour you have granted me; but I want expressions to thank you as I wish. Supply my inability, I conjure you; and whatever words you can use, be assured my feelings will be still stronger. You are right in supposing the promise you require of me will not pain me. I give it you the more freely, as it is not possible that I can live without you. I will now take my departure; and by the diligence with which I shall return, you will be convinced that I have done so, not from the fear of perjury, if I should break my promise, but because I have followed my own wishes, which extend only to pass my own life with you; and if I sometimes, with your own consent, leave you, I will always avoid the pain of a long absence."

Pari-Banou was the more delighted with these sentiments of Prince Ahmed, as they entirely freed her from the suspicion she had formed, that the eagerness he expressed to see the sultan of India was merely a specious pretext to break the faith he had pledged to her. "Depart, prince," she said, "whenever you please, but do not take it ill that I first give you some advice upon the manner in which you ought to conduct yourself during your journey. In the first place, I do not think it would be proper for you either to mention your marriage to the sultan, or my rank and situation; nor the place in which you reside, or have passed your time since you saw him. Beg him to be satisfied with knowing that you are happy, and that the motive for your paying him this visit is chiefly to lessen his uneasiness at being uncertain of your fate." She then gave him twenty horsemen to accompany him, all well mounted and equipped. When everything was ready, Prince Ahmed took leave of Pari-Banou, embracing her, and renewing the promise he had made her of returning as soon as possible.

They brought him a horse which the fairy had ordered to be prepared for him; and which, besides being most richly caparisoned, was also much more beautiful, and of greater value than any in the sultan's stables. He mounted it most gracefully, and after bidding the fairy farewell, set out.

As the road which led to the capital of the sultan was not long, Prince Ahmed arrived there in a very short time. As soon as he entered the city, the people were delighted to see him, and received him with acclamations of joy. The most part of them left their business, and accompanied him in crowds till he arrived at the sultan's apartment. His father received and embraced him with the greatest joy; complaining, nevertheless, in a manner which denoted his paternal affection, of the affliction into which his long absence had thrown him. "And this absence," added the sultan, "has been the cause of so much the more pain, as, after fate had determined to your disadvantage in favour of your brother Prince Ali, I was fearful that your despair had caused you to commit some rash action."

"Sire," replied Prince Ahmed, "I will leave it to your majesty to reflect whether, after having lost the princess Nourounnihar, who had been the sole object of my wishes, I could resolve to be a witness to the happiness of Prince Ali. If I had been capable of an indignity of this nature, what would the court and the whole city have thought of my love; what would even your majesty have thought of it? Love is a passion which will not abandon us at our pleasure. It completely subjects us—it tyrannizes, and a true lover has no longer the use of reason.

"Your majesty may remember," continued the prince, "that in drawing my bow, the most extraordinary thing happened to me that was ever known, for it was impossible, even in a plain so large, so level, and so unencumbered as that in which the horses are exercised, to find the arrow I had shot; in consequence of which I lost the acquisition of an object, that was not in justice less due to my affection than to that of the princes my brothers. Conquered as it were by the caprice of fate, I did not pass my time in useless complaints; but to satisfy my restless and uneasy mind, I separated myself from my attendants without being perceived, and returned by myself to the place in order to look for my arrow. I searched for it in every spot I could think of, to the right, and the places where those of Prince Houssain and Ali had been found, and where I thought it most likely that mine had fallen also; but all my endeavours were useless. I did not however give over, but pursued my inquiries, continuing to proceed straight forward in the line I thought it was likely to fall. I had already proceeded more than a league, looking on both sides as I went along, and sometimes even going out of the road, if anything appeared at all like an arrow, to examine it; when I began to reflect that it was not possible for mine to have gone so far. I stopped, and asked myself whether I was not insane to think that I could have strength enough to shoot an arrow to so great a distance, when not one of the most ancient heroes, who had been most famous for their strength, had ever done so. I thus reasoned with myself, and was about to abandon my enterprise; but when I was going to put my resolution into execution, I felt myself led on, as it were, against my will; and after walking four leagues, and till the plain was terminated by some steep rocks, I perceived an arrow. I ran and took it, and knew it to be the very same I had shot, but which had not been found either within the space or at the time it was necessary.

"Far, however, from thinking," continued Prince Ahmed, "that your majesty had been guilty of an injustice in determining in favour of Prince Ali, I interpreted what had happened quite differently; and I did not doubt but there was some mystery attached to this circumstance which might prove

for my advantage, and that I ought not to neglect anything that would tend to this development. And, in fact, I had no need to seek further. But this is a mystery concerning which I entreat your majesty not to take it ill if I remain silent, and I request you to be satisfied with knowing from my lips that I am happy and contented with my lot. In the midst of my happiness, there was one thing only that troubled me, or was capable of affording me uneasiness, and that was the distress I had no doubt you experienced from your ignorance of what had become of me after I thus disappeared from your court. I thought it, therefore, my duty to come and free you from this unpleasant state, as I have now done. This was my only motive for coming; and the only favour I ask of your majesty in return is, to permit me to come from time to time to pay my respects to you, and inform myself of the state of your health."

"My son," replied the sultan, "I cannot possibly refuse the permission you request; I should, nevertheless, have preferred that you had determined to come and live near me. Tell me at least by what means I can learn any intelligence of you whenever you should fail to come here yourself, or whenever your presence might be necessary." "Sire," replied Prince Ahmed, "what your majesty demands of me forms a part of the mystery I have mentioned; I entreat you then to suffer me to be silent on this point. I will so frequently return to pay my respects, that I only fear you will think me too importunate, rather than accuse me of negligence in not coming when my presence might be necessary."

The sultan of India did not press Prince Ahmed any more upon this subject. "My son," said he, "I do not wish to penetrate any further into your secret. I leave it entirely to yourself: but I must say that your presence affords me the greatest pleasure you can bestow upon me; that I have not received so much happiness for a long time past as you now afford me, and that you will be truly welcome whenever your own affairs or your inclination may induce you to come."

Prince Ahmed remained only three days at the court of the sultan his father; he set out very early on the fourth morning, and Pari-Banoue saw him return with the greater joy, as she did not expect to see him so soon; and the haste he made, urged her to condemn herself for having suspected him of being guilty of infidelity towards her, so contrary to his most solemn promise. She did not dissemble her suspicion, but frankly confessed her weakness, and requested his pardon. The union of these two lovers was thereafter so perfect, that the one did not breathe a wish unfelt by the other.

About a month after the return of Prince Ahmed, the fairy observed, that after having given her an account of his visit, and mentioned the conversation he had had with his father, and that he should get permission to come and pay his respects to him very often, this prince did not speak of the sultan any more than if no such person existed, although he had formerly constantly turned the conversation to him, and she concluded that he abstained from it on her account. She therefore one day took an opportunity of speaking upon this subject. "Tell me, my prince," said she, "have you forgotten the sultan your father, and do you not remember the promise you made him, that you would frequently go and see him? I have not forgotten what you said to me on your return, and I now put you in mind of it, that you may not wait any longer before you perform your promise for the first time."

"Madam," replied Prince Ahmed, in the same cheerful tone of voice as the fairy had spoken in, "I do not feel myself culpable for the negligence and forgetfulness with which you accuse me, because I would rather suffer the reproach which you make me without deserving it, than be exposed to the chance

of a refusal, by showing too much haste to obtain what it might give you pain to grant." "Prince," replied the fairy, "I do not wish you to retain this too circumspect conduct on my account; and that the same thing may not happen again, as it is now a month since you have seen the sultan your father, I think you never ought to let a longer time than this elapse between your visits to him. Begin then to-morrow, and continue to visit him every month, without having either to speak to me on the subject, or to wait till I mention it. I consent most willingly to this plan."

Prince Ahmed set out the next day with the same attendants, but better equipped, while he himself was still more magnificently mounted and dressed than he had been the first time; and he was received by the sultan with the same joy and satisfaction as before. He continued in that way for many months regularly to go and pay his respects, but always in a richer and more magnificent style.

At length some viziers, who were favourites of the sultan, and who judged of the grandeur and power of Prince Ahmed by the different proofs he thus gave of it, abused the liberty the sultan allowed them of speaking to him, in order to excite some emotions of anger in the sultan's breast against his son. They represented to him that it was no more than common prudence in him to wish to know where the prince's retreat was; whence he derived the means of living at so vast an expense, as he himself had assigned him no establishment or fixed revenue that could enable him to come to court, which he did only as a sort of boast, and to let him see that he had no occasion for the sultan's liberality to enable him to live like a prince; and that, in short, they were afraid that he intended to excite a rebellion against his person, and dethrone him.

The sultan was very far from being of opinion that Prince Ahmed was capable of forming so dreadful a design as that which the favourites attempted to accuse him of. "You mean to amuse me," he replied; "my son loves me, and I am the more convinced of his affection and fidelity, because I have not given him the least cause to be dissatisfied with me." Upon this, one of the favourites said, "Although, sire, in the opinion of every sensible person, your majesty could not have taken a better plan than that which you followed in directing your choice respecting the marriage of the princess Nourounnihar with one of the princes your sons, yet who can tell whether Prince Ahmed has submitted to the decision of chance with the same resignation as Prince Houssain? May not he think, that he himself was alone worthy of her, and that your majesty, in bestowing her upon one of his eldest brothers, in preference to him, and in suffering the matter to be decided by chance, has been guilty of an injustice towards him?"

"Your majesty may perhaps say," continued this malicious favourite, "that Prince Ahmed has not shown the least mark of discontent, that our fears are vain, and that we are wrong in suggesting any suspicion of this nature, and which may not have the least foundation against a prince of his rank! But, sure, it is possible that these suspicions may be well founded. Your majesty is not ignorant that, in so delicate and important an affair, it is necessary to be very careful. You should consider that this dissimulation on the part of the prince may be only for the purpose of amusing and deceiving your majesty; and that the danger is also the more to be dreaded, as Prince Ahmed seems to reside at no great distance from your capital. If your majesty also had paid the same attention to everything as we have done, you might have observed, that every time the prince comes to visit you, both he and his attendants are quite fresh in appearance: their dress and the ornaments, both of their persons and horses, have the same lustre as if they had that instant only come out of the hands of

the workmen. Even their horses are not the least fatigued, and appear as if they only came from their exercise. These are evident marks that Prince Ahmed resides in the neighbourhood, and we thought that we should be wanting in our duty if we did not humbly represent them to your majesty, as well for your own preservation as for the good of the state. It belongs to you to take such steps as you may judge most proper."

When the favourite had concluded this long speech, the sultan put an end to the conversation by saying, "However all this may be, I do not believe that my son Ahmed can be so wicked as you wish to persuade me; I am nevertheless obliged to you for your advice, and do not doubt that you have said everything with the best intentions."

The sultan spoke in this manner to his favourites, that they might not perceive that their discourse had made any impression upon his mind. He could not help, however, being much alarmed, and he resolved to observe the conduct of Prince Ahmed, without even informing his grand vizier. He ordered the enchantress to be sent for privately, and had her introduced through a secret door of the palace, and conducted to his apartment. "You told me the truth," said the sultan to her, on her entrance, "when you assured me that my son Ahmed was not dead, and I am much obliged to you for having done so; but you must now afford me a further satisfaction. Although I have since discovered him, and he now comes every month to pay me a visit, yet I have not been able to learn from him in what spot he has fixed his residence; and I do not wish to put such a restraint upon him as to compel him to tell me against his inclination. You, however, I have no doubt, are skilful enough to satisfy my curiosity, without its being known either to him, or to any one at my court. You know that he is here, and as he is accustomed to depart without taking leave either of me or any one else, you must lose no time. Go to-day, and place yourself on the road he takes, and observe him so well, that you may know to what place he retires; and then bring me the information."

After leaving the palace, as the enchantress had learnt the spot where Prince Ahmed had found his arrow, she instantly went and concealed herself so carefully among the rocks, that no one could perceive her.

Prince Ahmed set off the next morning at daybreak, without taking leave of the sultan his father or any of the courtiers, according to his usual custom. The enchantress saw him coming, and followed him with her eyes till she lost sight both of him and his attendants.

As these rocks formed an insurmountable barrier to mortals, either on foot or horseback, on account of their being so steep, the enchantress thought that one of these two things must be the fact; either that the prince retired into a cavern, or into some subterraneous place, where Genii and fairies took up their abode. As soon as she supposed that the prince and his attendants had disappeared, and were gone into the cavern or subterraneous place, which she conjectured to be there, she came out of the place in which she had concealed herself, and going into all the recesses as far as she could, she looked about on all sides of her, walking backwards and forwards several times. But notwithstanding all the care she took, she could not perceive any entrance into the cavern, nor even the iron door, which had not escaped the sight of Prince Ahmed. In fact, this door was incapable of being seen but by men, and only by such of those as the fairy Pari-Banou wished to see, and not at all by women.

The enchantress, who found that she was only giving herself much useless trouble, was obliged to be satisfied with the discovery she had already made. She returned, therefore, to give an account of her proceedings to the sultan; and having related the several steps she had taken, she added, "Your majesty may easily conjecture, after what I have the honour of informing you of, that it will

not be a very difficult matter for me to afford you all the satisfaction you can wish respecting the conduct of Prince Ahmed. I will not say what I think at present, because I would rather make it known to your majesty in a way that can leave no doubt on your mind. In order to accomplish it, I only request time and patience, and full permission to follow my own plans, without being obliged to inform you of the means I make use of." The sultan was satisfied with what she proposed. "You shall do as you please," he said; "go, you are mistress of your actions; and I will wait with patience to see the effect of your promises." In order to give her some encouragement, he presented her with a very valuable diamond, telling her at the same time that it was only the beginning of a greater reward, when she should complete the important service, for the accomplishment of which he relied entirely upon her skill.

Since Prince Ahmed had obtained permission of the fairy to go to the court of his father, he had never neglected to pay his respects there regularly once a month; and as the enchantress was not ignorant of that, she waited till the next month had elapsed. A day or two before it was quite over, she did not fail to go on foot to the rocks, and wait at the very spot in which she had lost sight of Prince Ahmed and his attendants, for the purpose of putting the scheme she had formed into execution.

The next morning, when the prince, as usual, came out of the iron door, with the same attendants as always accompanied him, he passed close to the enchantress, whom he did not know to be one; and observing that she was lying down, with her head supported against a piece of the rock, and that she complained like a person in great pain, compassion induced him to go nearer to her to inquire what was the matter with her, and whether he could afford her any assistance. The cunning enchantress, without lifting up her head, but looking at the prince so as still more to excite his compassion, replied in broken and interrupted words, as if she had great difficulty in breathing, that she had left her house in the city, and upon the road was seized with a most violent fever, so that her strength quite failed her, and she was obliged to stop, and remain in the state they then saw her, in a place far distant from any house, and without the hope of being relieved. "My good woman," said Prince Ahmed, "you are not so far from assistance as you may suppose. I am ready to convince you of it, and have you conveyed to a place very near this, where you will not only have every attention paid you, but will very soon be cured. You have therefore only to rise, and suffer one of my people to take you behind him."

At hearing this, the enchantress, who had feigned this illness only for the purpose of discovering his abode, how he lived, and what was his situation, did not refuse the kind offer he so generously made her; and in order to show, rather by her actions than her words, that she accepted of it, she made several efforts to rise, pretending all the time that her illness prevented her. On this, two of the attendants assisted her in getting up, and placed her on horseback behind another. While they were remounting, the prince turned back, and went first towards the iron door, which was opened by one of the horsemen, who advanced for that purpose. He went in, and when he was arrived at the court of Pari-Banou's palace, without dismounting, he sent one of the attendants to say that he wished to speak to her.

The fairy made the greater haste, as she could not conceive the motive that induced the prince to return so suddenly. When the latter, without giving her time to inquire the reason, said, "I entreat you, my princess"—pointing towards the enchantress, whom two of the attendants had taken from the horse, and then supported by holding her arms—"to have the same compassion on this poor woman that I have had. I found her in the state you see, and have promised her all the assistance she may require. And I recommend her to you, as

I am well satisfied you will not have her neglected, either from your own kind consideration, or because it is my request."

Pari-Banou, who had not taken her eyes off the pretended sick woman during the whole of Prince Ahmed's speech, ordered two of her women to take her from the other attendants, and carry her into an apartment of the palace, and also to take as much care of her as they would of her own person.

While the two female attendants were executing the orders which the fairy had given them, Pari-Banou went up to Prince Ahmed and said, in a low tone of voice, "I give you great praise, prince, for your compassion; it is worthy of you and your high birth, and I feel a great pleasure in aiding your kind wishes; I must, however, tell you, that I am very much afraid that this good action will meet with but a bad recompense. It does not seem to me that this woman is so ill as she wishes to appear; and unless I am very much deceived, she is employed for the express purpose of affording you some great mortification. Do not, however, let this afflict you; be assured that whatever they may contrive and plan against you, shall be of no effect; I will deliver you from all the snares they may set for you; go, therefore, and pursue your journey."

This speech of the fairy did not in the least alarm Prince Ahmed. "As I have no recollection, my princess," he replied, "of ever having injured any one, and as I have no intention of doing so, I do not think that any person can have thought of attempting to hurt me. Let this, however, be as it may, I shall never cease from doing all the good I can, whenever an opportunity may present itself." Having said this, he took leave of the fairy, and again pursued his journey, which had been interrupted by meeting with the enchantress, and soon arrived, with his attendants, at the court of the sultan his father, who received him as near as possible in his usual manner, endeavouring, as much as he could, to appear as if nothing had happened, and that the conversation which his favourites had held had excited no suspicions in his breast.

In the mean time, the two females, to whom Pari-Banou had given her orders, conducted the enchantress into a very beautiful apartment, richly furnished. They at first made her sit down on a sofa, where, while she supported her head against a cushion of gold brocade, they prepared a bed near her, on the same sofa, the mattresses of which were made of satin richly embroidered, the sheets were of the finest linen, and the counterpane of cloth of gold. When they had assisted her in getting to bed—for the enchantress still continued to pretend that the fever fit with which she had been attacked, tormented her so much that she could not assist herself,—one of them went out of the room, and came back soon with a basin of the finest porcelain in her hand, containing a certain liquor. She presented it to the enchantress, and while the other female assisted her in sitting up, "Take this liquor," said she who brought it; "it is water from the fountain of lions, and is a sovereign remedy for fevers of every kind. You will find the effects of it in less than an hour."

In order to act her part the better, the enchantress suffered them to entreat her for a long time, as if she had an insurmountable dislike to drink this liquor. She at last took the basin, and swallowed its contents, shaking her head at the same time, as if she did the greatest violence to her feelings. When she had again laid down, the two females covered her all over. "Remain as you are," said she who had brought the basin, "and even go to sleep, if the desire should come upon you. We will now leave you, and hope to find you quite cured when we return in about an hour."

As the enchantress had not undertaken this scheme for the purpose of being confined a long time with a pretended illness, but only with the view of discovering the retreat of Prince Ahmed, and what his motive was for renouncing the court of the sultan, and as she was now perfectly satisfied on that point, she

would the more readily have declared that the liquor had produced its usual effect, because she was desirous of going back and informing the sultan of the fortunate accomplishment of the commission with which she was charged : but as they told her that its efficacy was not instantaneous, she was compelled, in spite of herself, to wait for the return of the two females.

They came back at the time they had mentioned ; and they found the enchantress risen, dressed, and sitting on the sofa, from whence she got up the moment she saw them come in. " O admirable draught," she exclaimed ; " it has produced its effect much sooner than you told me ; and I have been a long time impatiently waiting for you, to entreat you to conduct me to your charitable and excellent mistress, that I may thank her for her great goodness, for which I shall be for ever obliged to her ; and that I may, since I have been so miraculously cured, proceed on my journey."

These two females, who were of the fairy race as well as their mistress, after having given evident signs how much they rejoiced in her speedy cure, walked on before to show her the way ; and they conducted her through many apartments, all of which were much more superb than that she had been in, until they came to the most magnificent and richly furnished saloon of any in the whole palace.

Pari-Banou was seated in this, on a throne formed of massive gold, enriched with diamonds, rubies, and pearls, of an extraordinary size ; and on each side of her there were a great number of fairies, all extremely handsome, and superbly dressed. The enchantress was quite dazzled at the sight of so much magnificence ; she could not utter a word even to thank the fairy as she intended, but remained, after prostrating herself at the foot of the throne, like a person struck motionless. Pari-Banou spared her the trouble of addressing her by immediately saying, " I am very happy, my good woman, that the occasion of being of use to you has presented itself, and that I now find you in a state proper to pursue your journey. I do not wish to detain you, but perhaps you would have no objection to see my palace. Go with my women ; they will accompany and show you everything worth seeing."

The enchantress continued in her state of astonishment, and again could only prostrate herself a second time before the throne, till her face touched the carpet which covered the foot of it. She then took her leave without having the courage to utter a single word, and was conducted by the two fairies who before accompanied her. She was shown, and observed all the same apartments one after the other, through which Pari-Banou herself had carried Prince Ahmed, the first time he presented himself before her, as has already been mentioned ; and she continually, as she went along, uttered exclamations of astonishment and delight. But what most surprised her, after having observed the whole palace, was what the two fairies told her respecting their mistress ; that all this was but a small part of her grandeur and power, and that in different parts of her dominions she had other palaces, even more than they could tell, all on different plans and of different styles of architecture, and not less superb and magnificent. In conversing with her on these and other circumstances, they conducted her to the iron door, through which Prince Ahmed had brought her ; they opened it, and wished her a good journey. She then took leave of them, and thanked them for the trouble they had been at on her account.

After proceeding a few steps, the enchantress turned round to observe the door, that she might know it again ; but she looked in vain. It was now invisible with respect to her, as well as every other female, as has been before remarked. She now went back to the sultan well satisfied, except as to this one circumstance, of the success of her plan, and with having so happily executed the commission she had been charged with. As soon as she got back

to the city, she went along the most private streets, and was introduced by the same secret door as before into the palace. The sultan being informed of her arrival, ordered her into his presence; and as he observed that she had rather a gloomy cast on her countenance, he thought she had not succeeded, and immediately said, "I conjecture from your looks, that your journey has been unsuccessful, and that you can give me no information concerning the business I intrusted to your care." "Sire," replied the enchantress, "your majesty will give me leave to say, that it is not from my appearance that you ought to judge whether I have succeeded in the commission you have honoured me with, but from the faithful report I am going to make of what I have done, and of everything that has happened to me, by which you will find that I have neither forgotten nor neglected anything that could render me worthy of your majesty's approbation. The gloom on my countenance, which you remarked, arises from a different cause than from the want of success, for with the latter I trust your majesty will be well satisfied. I will not now explain the reason, because my relation, if you have the patience to listen to it, will sufficiently inform you."

The enchantress then related to the sultan of India how she pretended illness, and thus excited Prince Ahmed's compassion, who took her into his subterraneous residence, where he recommended her to the care of the most beautiful fairy that ever was seen, and such as mortals have no idea of; and that he requested this fairy to see that every attention was paid to her, in order to recover her. She then informed him with what readiness Pari-Banou gave orders to the two fairies who attended and took the charge of her, not to leave her till she had quite recovered; and that she was sure that all this kindness and consideration could arise only from the desire of a wife to gratify her husband's wishes. The enchantress also did not fail to give even an exaggerated account of the surprise she experienced at sight of the fairy's palace, which she did not believe had its equal in the whole world, as the two fairies carried her along in their arms, like a sick person, as she pretended to be, who could not either walk or stand without help. She then went on informing the sultan of their great anxiety, and the attention they showed her when they had conveyed her to an apartment; of the liquor they gave her to drink, of the speedy cure that followed, and though this was equally feigned as the illness itself, yet that she did not in the least doubt the virtue of the liquor. She then adverted to the majesty and splendid appearance of Pari-Banou, seated on a throne, thickly studded with precious stones, the value of which surpassed all the riches of the kingdom of India; and to the variety and profusion of other superb things, the value of which was incalculable, that were contained within the great extent of this palace.

The enchantress, having finished this account of the success of her commission, went on with her discourse in these terms: "What does your majesty think of those unheard-of riches? Perhaps you will say that you are in the greatest admiration at them, and that you rejoice at the great fortune to which Prince Ahmed is arrived, by thus partaking of them in conjunction with the fairy. With respect to myself, sire, I entreat your majesty to pardon me if I take the liberty of expressing a different opinion. I am even greatly alarmed, when I think of the misfortunes that may in consequence befall him. This was the cause of that uneasiness which your majesty remarked in my countenance, and which I was unable entirely to conceal from you. I am sure that Prince Ahmed is naturally of too good a disposition to undertake anything hostile to your majesty's interest; but who can be sure that the fairy will not, through her attractions, her caresses, and the influence she has by these means acquired over the mind of her husband, inspire him with the horrid wish of supplanting

you, and seizing the crown? It is therefore your majesty's business to pay every attention that so important an affair deserves."

However satisfied the sultan of India was of the excellence of Prince Ahmed's natural disposition, he could not help being affected at the speech of the enchantress. "I am much obliged to you," he said, as she was about to take her leave, "both for the trouble you have given yourself, and for your good advice. I am aware of its importance, and I cannot do better than take the opinion of others on the subject."

At the very moment when they had come to announce the arrival of the enchantress to the sultan, he was conversing to the same favourites who had already excited those suspicions in his breast against Prince Ahmed. These were still further increased by the enchantress. He then returned to his favourites, and took her with him. He partly informed them of what he had learnt; and having communicated to them the reason why he was fearful the fairy would alter the disposition of the prince, he asked them by what means they thought he might be enabled to prevent so great an evil.

One of the favourites then spoke in the name of the rest. "In order, sire, to counteract this evil, as your majesty knows the person who is the author of it, as he is now in the very midst of your court, and as you have the full power to do it, you ought not to hesitate, but instantly arrest him; and, I do not say to take away his life, that perhaps would be going rather too far, but at least to imprison him very closely for the rest of his life." All the other favourites were unanimous in applauding this advice.

The enchantress, however, who thought this mode of proceeding too violent, requested the sultan's leave to say a few words; and when she had obtained it, she said, "I am persuaded, sire, that it is from the zealous interest which these counsellors have in your majesty's welfare, that they are induced to propose to you the arrest and imprisonment of Prince Ahmed; but I trust they will agree with me, in thinking it necessary, when they arrest the prince, to arrest also all those who accompany him; but you must reflect that these are Genii. Do you think it will be an easy matter to surprise them, and seize their persons? Will they not instantly disappear, by means of the power they possess of rendering themselves invisible? And will they not instantly go and inform the fairy of the insult you have offered to her husband? And she is not to be insulted without danger of her bitterest revenge. But if, by some other less violent method, the sultan can secure himself from the wicked designs that Prince Ahmed may form against him, without the least danger of sullying his majesty's glory, or of any person suspecting that he has any ill design on his part, would it not be right to pursue that method? If his majesty has any confidence in my advice, he will induce Prince Ahmed, from a point of honour, to procure him certain advantages through the power of his fairy, under a pretence of deriving a considerable benefit from them, as Genii and fairies can easily accomplish things that are far above the power of mortals. For instance, every time your majesty wishes to take the field, you are obliged to be at a considerable expense, not only for pavilions and tents for yourself and army, but also for camels, mules, and other beasts of burthen, only to carry all this apparatus. Now, could you not prevail upon him, through the great influence he has over the fairy, to procure a pavilion for you, so small, that it might be carried in the hand, and yet so large that your whole army might encamp under it? I need not say any more to your majesty. If the prince should procure you this pavilion, there are many other requests of a similar nature, which you can make, till at last he will be obliged to sink under either the difficulty or the impossibility of executing them, however fertile the genius and invention of the fairy may be, who has thus taken him from you by her spells and enchant-

ments. He will then be so struck with shame, that he will not dare to appear here any more, and will be compelled to pass the remainder of his life with the fairy, excluded from all commerce with the world, and your majesty will have nothing more to fear from his enterprises, and will have not to reproach yourself with so hateful a crime as that of shedding the blood of a son, or of confining him in perpetual imprisonment."

When the enchantress had finished her speech, the sultan asked the favourites, if they had anything better to propose. And as he observed that they were quite silent, he determined to follow the advice of the enchantress, as it seemed to him to be the most rational, and as it was also much the best suited to that mildness of disposition he always showed in his general conduct.

The next day, when Prince Ahmed presented himself before the sultan, who was consulting with his favourites, and when he had taken his seat by his side, as his presence did not cause any restraint, the conversation, continued, for some time, to turn upon several indifferent topics. At last, the sultan, addressing himself to Prince Ahmed, said, "When you first appeared, and relieved me from the misery in which the great length of your absence had plunged me, you made a mystery of the place you had chosen for your retreat. Satisfied with seeing you, and being told by yourself that you were contented with your situation, I did not desire to penetrate into your secret, when I found that you did not wish it. I know not what reason you may have had to pursue this conduct towards a father who, like me, has always shown that he took the most lively interest in your happiness. I now know, indeed, in what that happiness consists; and I sincerely rejoice in it with you. I heartily approve the steps you have taken in marrying a fairy, so worthy of being beloved, so rich, and so powerful, as my information, which is very good, points out. Powerful as I am, I should have been unable to have provided for you such a connexion as this. In the high rank to which you are elevated, and which any one but a father like me would envy, I ask you not only to continue upon the good terms with me that you have hitherto done, but that you will employ your influence with the fairy, to obtain her assistance in anything I may have occasion for, and I shall, at this moment, put your influence with her to the test. You cannot be ignorant of the very great expense, not to mention the trouble and inconvenience, which my generals and other officers, as well as myself, suffer, from being obliged, every time we take the field during war, to have pavilions and tents, as well as camels and other beasts of burthen, to carry them from place to place. If you will consider the pleasure you can afford me, I am sure you will not make any difficulty in requesting the fairy to give you such a pavilion that you can hold it in your hand, and yet sufficiently large to contain my whole army; particularly when you inform her it is for me. The difficulty of the thing will not cause you to be refused, for all the world knows that fairies can do most extraordinary things."

Prince Ahmed was not in the least prepared to expect that the sultan his father would make such a request of him, as it appeared to him not only very difficult, but absolutely impossible; for although he was not entirely ignorant of the great power of Genii and fairies, he nevertheless very much doubted whether that power was able to procure such a pavilion as he requested. Besides, he had not hitherto asked anything of Pari-Banou; he was satisfied with the continual proofs she gave of her affection, and he had never neglected anything that tended to convince her that his regard was equally strong, and that he had no other wish than to preserve her good opinion. He was, therefore, in the greatest embarrassment about the answer he should make. "Sire," he replied, "if I have made any mystery to your majesty of what has happened to me, and of the plan I pursued after having found my arrow, it

arose from my not supposing it a matter of any importance to you. I am ignorant how this mystery has been revealed to you, but I cannot, however, pretend to deny the fact, as you have represented it. I am the husband of the fairy you have mentioned; I love her, and am persuaded that her affection for me is equal; but what power or influence, as your majesty supposes, I may have over her, I am entirely ignorant of. I have not only made no trial of it, but have not even thought about it; and I very much wish you would dispense with my making the attempt, and suffer me to enjoy the happiness of our mutual affection, without my appearing to possess any interested motive. But the request of a father is a command to a son who, like me, feels it his duty to obey him in everything. I cannot, however, express how much against my inclination, and how repugnant to my feelings this request is; I will, nevertheless, make it to my wife, as your majesty wishes that I should do so; but I cannot promise you that I shall obtain it; and if I cease from coming to pay my respects to you, you may consider it as a proof of my failure. I therefore now ask you to pardon me, and to consider that it is yourself who will reduce me to this extremity."

"My son," replied the sultan, "I should be very sorry, if what I ask of you should be the cause of my not seeing you any more; but I readily perceive that you are not acquainted with the power which a husband has over a wife. Yours will show that she has but little regard for you, if with the power which, as a fairy, she must possess, she refuses to grant you so trifling a thing as your regard for me induces you to request. Shake off your fears; they only arise from your not supposing you are as much beloved as you are in reality. Only go and make the request, and you will find that the fairy loves you more than you now believe; and remember, that the fault of being backward in making requests, often deprives us of great benefits. Reflect, that you would not refuse anything that she requested, because you love her; neither will she refuse what you ask, because she equally loves you."

The speech of the sultan did not, however, convince Prince Ahmed. He would much rather that he should have required anything else of him, than to expose him to the risk of displeasing Pari-Banou, who was so dear to him, and on account of the vexation he felt from what had passed, he left the court two days sooner than his usual time. As soon as he arrived, the fairy, before whom he had hitherto constantly presented himself with an open and contented countenance, inquired of him the cause of the change she observed. When she found that he asked after her health instead of answering her question, with an air, too, that evidently showed he wished to evade it, she replied, "I will satisfy your inquiries, when you have answered mine." The prince, for a long time, tried to convince her that nothing had happened; but the more he asserted it, the more she pressed for an explanation. "I cannot," she said, "see you in the state you now are, without almost insisting upon your declaring the cause of your anxiety, that I may endeavour, whatever it may be, to dispel it. It must be something very extraordinary indeed, if it be out of my power, and nothing less than the death of the sultan your father. If that be the fact, time only, in conjunction with my endeavour, will afford you consolation."

Prince Ahmed could no longer resist the earnest wishes of the fairy. "Madam," he replied, "may God prolong the life of the sultan my father, and bless him with happiness to the end of his days. I left him in perfect health; this, therefore, is not the cause of the vexation which you perceive I feel: the sultan himself is the cause of it, and I am the more disturbed at it, because it puts me under the necessity of being importunate towards you. In the first place, you well know the care I have taken, and you have yourself approved of it, to conceal from him the happiness I have in seeing and loving you, and in

deserving, in return, your good opinion and affection; and in the interchange of our mutual faith. He has, however, although I am ignorant by what means, been informed of it."

At this moment Pari-Banou interrupted Prince Ahmed. "I will tell you," she answered. "Do you recollect what I said to you about the woman, whom you thought so ill, and who therefore excited your compassion? It is she who has informed the sultan of what you had concealed from him. I told you that I had an idea she was not so ill as she pretended, and she has now confirmed the truth of my suspicions. In fact, after the two females, to whose care I recommended her, had persuaded her to take a draught of a particular kind of water, that is infallible in all sorts of fevers, though she had not the least occasion for it, she pretended that this water had cured her; and she instantly got up, and was brought to me to take her leave, that she might go as soon as possible to give an account of the success of her enterprise. She was even in such haste, that she would have departed without seeing my palace, if, when I ordered the two females to show it her, I had not made her understand that it was well worth the trouble of going over. But proceed, and let us see the reason of the sultan's wishing to make you so troublesome to me: a thing, however, which I wish you to be convinced, can never in reality happen."

"You may have observed," resumed Prince Ahmed, "that I have till now been satisfied with your affection for me, and have never requested any favour of you, but to continue your regard. After possessing indeed so amiable a wife, what could I wish for more! I am not, however, ignorant of the greatness of your power; but I had made it a point not to put it to the proof. Consider then, I entreat you, that it is not I, but the sultan my father who makes a request, which seems to me very foolish and miscreet; it is, that you would procure a pavilion, which may secure from the injuries of the weather, when he takes the field, himself, his court, and all his army, and yet so small, that you may hold it in your hand. Once more let me say, that I do not make the request, but the sultan my father, by means of me."

"Prince," replied Pari-Banou with a smile, "I am really sorry that such a trifle should have afforded you the least embarrassment, or have disturbed your mind as it has done. I see very well, that two circumstances have occasioned it. One is, the condition you have imposed upon yourself to be satisfied with loving me, and being beloved, and abstaining from taking the liberty of making any request that will put my power to the test; the other, as I have not the least doubt, whatever you may say to the contrary, is, that you think the demand the sultan has made through you, is beyond my power to comply with. With respect to the first motive, I must both praise and esteem you for it, and if possible love you still more. As to the second, I shall have no difficulty in convincing you, that what the sultan requires is a mere trifle; and if there were occasion, I could execute things infinitely more difficult. Calm then your mind, and do not let this vex you any more; be assured, that so far from your being importunate, I shall always have a great pleasure in granting, through my affection for you, everything you can wish."

Having said this, the fairy ordered her female treasurer to appear. When she came, Pari-Banou said to her, "Nourghan, bring me the largest pavilion that is in the treasury." Nourghan went out, and almost instantly returned with a pavilion, that she could not only hold in her hand, but which might be quite hidden, if she closed it. She presented it to her mistress, who took it, and then gave it to Prince Ahmed, that he might examine it.

When the prince saw what the fairy called a pavilion, and the largest, as she said, that was in her treasury, he thought that she meant to joke with him; and his countenance expressed evident proofs of his surprise. Pari-Banou, who

observed and readily conjectured what he thought, burst into a fit of laughter. "And do you think, my prince," she exclaimed, "that I meant to ridicule you? You shall instantly see whether that is my intention. Nourigban," she said, addressing herself to the treasurers, and taking the pavilion at the same time from the hands of Prince Ahmed, "go and erect it, that the prince may judge whether the sultan his father will find it smaller than what he wishes."

The treasurers left the palace, and went far enough to erect the pavilion, one end of which, when it was finished, reached to the roof of the palace. As soon as it was extended, Prince Ahmed found it not indeed too small, but so large that even two armies, both as numerous as that of the sultan's, could easily be covered by it. "I ask you, my princess," exclaimed the prince, "a thousand pardons for my incredulity. After what I now see, I do not doubt but you can readily execute whatever you may wish to undertake." "You think, then," replied the fairy, "that this pavilion is larger than he will ever have occasion for; but you must observe also, that it has the property either of extending or contracting itself to the exact size of what it is wanted to cover, of its own accord."

The treasurers took down the pavilion, reduced it to its original form, brought it, and presented it to the prince. He immediately took it, and without waiting any longer, set out the next morning on horseback, accompanied by his usual attendants, and went to pay his respects to his father.

The sultan, who was perfectly persuaded that such a pavilion as he had demanded was an impossibility, was very much astonished at the diligence of the prince his son. He received the pavilion, and after having admired its small size, he was in the greatest surprise, and from which he did not very soon recover, when he saw it erected in the large plain that has been mentioned before; and when he saw that two armies, quite as large as his own, could be conveniently encamped under it. For fear he might regard this as superfluous, and even inconvenient, Prince Ahmed did not forget to inform him that its size would always be proportionate to that of his army.

The sultan, in appearance, gave his son the strongest proofs how much he was obliged to him for so magnificent a present, and begged him to return the fairy his most grateful thanks. And to prove the great value he set upon it, he ordered it to be kept very carefully in his treasury. But in reality he felt still more jealous than when the enchantress and his flatterers first excited that hateful passion in his breast; as when he considered the favour of the fairy, he concluded the prince his son could perform many things infinitely beyond what was in his own power, notwithstanding all his grandeur and riches. More anxious therefore than ever, to discover some means to destroy him, he again consulted the enchantress, who advised him to engage the prince to bring him some water from the fountain of lions.

When the sultan had as usual assembled his courtiers in the evening, where Prince Ahmed also was present, he addressed him in these terms: "I have already shown you, my son, how much I feel myself obliged to you, by procuring the pavilion for me, which I esteem as the most valuable thing in my treasury; but you must also from your regard for me do another thing, which will not afford me less pleasure. I understand that the fairy your wife has a certain water from the fountain of lions, which cures all sorts even of the most dangerous fevers. Now as I am very well assured that my health is very dear to you, I do not suppose that you will be unwilling to request some of it, and bring it to me, as a sovereign remedy that I may make use of whenever I have occasion. Do me, I beg of you, this important service, and thus complete your tender and filial regard towards a good father."

Prince Ahmed, who thought that the sultan would certainly have been very

well satisfied with possessing a pavilion so curious and useful as that which he had procured for him, and that he would not impose a new office upon him, which might injure him in the good opinion of Pari-Banou, remained as if he were really dumb at this new request of the sultan, notwithstanding the assurance he had received from the fairy, that she would comply with all his wishes, as far as was in her power. After a silence of some time, he thus replied: "I entreat your majesty to be assured that there is nothing I am not myself ready to do to procure what will contribute to prolong your life; but I could wish that it were to be done without the interference of my wife; it is for this reason, that I dare not promise you to procure this water. All I can do is, to assure you that I will make the request; but in doing so I shall hurt my own feelings as much as when I requested the pavilion."

When Prince Ahmed returned to the fairy the next morning, he gave her a sincere and faithful account of everything that he had done, and of what had happened at the court of the sultan when he presented the pavilion, for which he acknowledged himself much obliged to her. Nor did he also omit to mention the fresh request that the sultan had charged him to make; and in conclusion he said, "I mention this to you, my princess, because I would faithfully tell you all that passed between the sultan and myself. You, however, are mistress, either to comply with, or reject it, as you please, as if I had no interest in it. I wish exactly what you do."

"No, no," replied the fairy; "I am very well pleased that the sultan of India is aware that you are not indifferent to me. I wish to satisfy him; and whatever advice the enchantress may give him,—for I know very well that he attends to what she says,—he shall find no deficiency either in you or me. There is great malice in what he den and, as you will be convinced from the account I am going to give you. The fountain of lions is in the middle of the court of a large castle, the entrance to which is guarded by four very powerful and fierce lions, two of which sleep alternately, while the other two watch; but let not this alarm you, I will afford you the means of passing them without any danger."

Pari-Banou was at this moment employed with her needle; and as she had several balls of thread by her, she took one, and gave it to the prince. "In the first place," said she, "take this ball; I will tell you presently what use you are to make of it. Secondly, order two horses to be got ready, one for you to ride, and the other for you to lead, which is to be loaded with a sheep, divided into four quarters, and which we must have killed to-day. Thirdly, you must provide yourself with a vessel, which indeed I will give you, to get the water in to-morrow. Early in the morning you must mount one horse, and lead the other; and when you have got beyond the iron door, throw this ball of thread before you. It will roll on, and not stop, until it arrives at the gate of the castle. Do you follow it there, and when it stops you will see the four lions, as the gate will be open. Those two which are watching will awaken the other two that are asleep with their roaring. Do not, however, be alarmed, but throw to each of them a quarter of the sheep, without dismounting. Having done this, lose no time, but spur your horse and go with the utmost speed to the fountain; fill your vessel while on horseback, and return with the same celerity. The lions will be still employed in eating, and will suffer you to come out."

Prince Ahmed set out the next morning at the time the fairy had told him; and he performed every part of his expedition in the manner she had pointed out. He arrived at the gate of the castle, distributed the four quarters of the sheep to the four lions, and after passing intrepidly through the midst of them, he came to the fountain, and got the water. Having filled his vessel he went

back, and left the castle in as perfect safety as he entered. When he had got to a little distance he turned round, and perceived two of the lions following him. Without being at all alarmed, he drew his sabre, and prepared to defend himself. But he observed while he kept going on that one of them turned out of the road on one side, at a little distance from him, and made signs with his head and tail that he was not come for the purpose of doing him any injury, but only to go on before him, while the other followed behind; he put his sabre again into its sheath, and in this manner pursued his journey to the capital of India, which he entered, accompanied by the two lions, who did not leave him till he arrived at the gate of the sultan's palace. They then suffered him to enter, after which they took the same road back again by which they had come, although not without causing great alarm among the common people and all who saw them—some hiding themselves, others flying on all sides, in order to avoid meeting them—while the lions themselves went very quietly along, without showing any marks of ferocity.

Many officers, who presented themselves to assist the prince in dismounting, accompanied him to the sultan's apartment, where he was in conversation with his favourites. Prince Ahmed then approached the throne, and setting the vessel of water at the feet of the sultan, he kissed the rich carpet that covered the footstool; and when he got up, he said, "Here, sire, is the salutary water which your majesty has wished for, to put among the richest and most curious things in your treasury. I can only pray that your health may be so perfect, that you may never have occasion to make use of it."

When Prince Ahmed had finished his speech, the sultan made him take a place on his right hand, and then replied, "My obligation to you, my son, for this present, is as great as the danger you have been exposed to through your regard for me." For the enchantress had informed him of it, as she knew the fountain of lions, and the danger every person who went there was liable to. "Do me the pleasure," he added, "to inform me by what art, or rather by what unheard-of power, you have been protected."

"I cannot, sire," replied the prince, "assume any part of the compliment to myself which your majesty bestows upon me. It is all due to the fairy my wife; and I attribute to myself no other honour than that of having strictly followed her excellent instructions." He then, by the recital of his journey, and the methods he had pursued, informed the sultan what her advice consisted in. When he had finished, the sultan, who had attended to him with very evident marks of pleasure, but who nevertheless internally felt his envy and jealousy increase, instead of diminishing, got up and retired to the interior of his palace, where he waited quite alone for the enchantress, whom he had sent for.

On her arrival, she spared the sultan the trouble of mentioning the prince, or the success of his expedition, for she had been informed of it by the report that was spread over the city, and she said that she was now prepared with the most infallible method. She informed the sultan what this method was; and the next day, in the assembly of the courtiers, the sultan declared it to Prince Ahmed, who was present, in these words: "I have now, my son, but one more petition to urge, after which I will require nothing further, either from you or the fairy your wife, and this is to procure a man for me, who is not more than a foot and a half high, but whose beard is thirty feet long, who carries a bar of iron on his shoulders that weighs five hundred pounds, which he makes use of as a quarter-staff, and who can speak."

Prince Ahmed, who did not think there existed such a man as the sultan his father wished for, desired to be excused; but the sultan persisted in his request, and added, that the fairy could perform still more incredible things.

The following day, when Prince Ahmed returned to the subterraneous kingdom of Pari-Banou, and had acquainted her with the fresh request of the sultan his father, which he looked upon, he said, as a still more impossible thing than he had conceived the two former, he added, "I cannot possibly imagine in what part of the universe there can be a man of this kind. The sultan, without doubt, wishes to try whether my simplicity will induce me to seek after such a one. If indeed there should be such a one, it must be his intention to have me destroyed. For how can he suppose that I can seize so short a man, who is armed in the way he mentions? What weapons could I make use of to compel him to submit to me? If then there be any means to extricate me with honour from this dilemma, I beg you will explain them to me."

"Do not, my prince, alarm yourself," replied the fairy: "you run a considerable risk in procuring the water from the fountain of lions for the sultan your father, but there is no danger in discovering such a man as he requires. In fact, my brother Schaibar is just such a man, who is so far from resembling me, although we have the same father, that he is of the most violent disposition, of which nothing can prevent him from giving the most sanguinary proofs whenever his passions are excited, or he is in the least displeased or offended. Except in this one point he is the best creature in the world, and he is always ready to oblige me in whatever may be required of him. He is made exactly as the sultan has described, and he carries no other weapon than a bar of iron that weighs five hundred pounds, without which he never stirs; and this serves to make him respected. I will cause him to make his appearance, and you shall judge whether I have not spoken the truth: but above all things, mind and prepare yourself against being alarmed at his extraordinary figure when he presents himself." "My queen," replied Prince Ahmed, "do you not say that Schaibar is your brother? However ill made and deformed then he may be, I shall be so far from being frightened at him, that this circumstance alone will make me love, honour, and look upon him as one of my nearest kinsmen."

The fairy then ordered a golden vessel in which perfumes are burnt to be brought into the vestibule of the palace, full of fire, and also a box of the same metal, which was presented to her. She opened it and took out a perfume that was kept there, and as she threw it upon the fire a thick and dense smoke arose.

A few moments after this ceremony, "My prince," said Pari-Banou, "my brother is come; do you not see him?" The prince looked, and perceived Schaibar, who was only a foot and a half high, and who approached in a grave and sedate manner, with the iron bar of five hundred pounds' weight upon his shoulders; and his thick and well-grown beard of thirty feet long, which projected forwards and did not touch the ground. His moustaches, which were in proportion, went quite back to his ears, and almost covered his whole face. His little pigs' eyes were buried in his head, which was of a most enormous size, and was covered with a pointed cap. And added to all this, he had a projecting hump both before and behind.

If the prince had not been previously informed that it was the brother of Pari-Banou, he could not have beheld him without the greatest alarm; encouraged, however, by the knowledge of this, he waited with fortitude by the side of the fairy, and received him without showing the least marks of fear.

Schaibar, who, as he advanced, looked at Prince Ahmed with an eye that would have chilled his very soul, demanded of Pari-Banou, as he first addressed her, who that man was. "Brother," she replied, "he is my husband. His name is Ahmed, and he is son to the sultan of India. The reason that I did not invite you to my nuptials, was that I was unwilling to take you off from

the expedition in which you were then engaged, and from which I have learnt with the greatest pleasure that you are returned victorious; and it is on his account that I have now taken the liberty of sending for you."

On hearing this speech, Schaibar cast a most gracious look on Prince Ahmed, which however did not in the least lessen his savage and haughty appearance. "Sister," said he, "is there anything in which I can be of any service to him? He has only to mention it. It is enough for me to know that he is your husband, to induce me to gratify him in anything he may wish." "The sultan his father," replied Pari-Banou, "has expressed himself curious to see you; I beg you to have the goodness to let him be your conductor." "He has only to precede," added Schaibar, "I am ready to follow him." "It is too late, brother," said Pari-Banou, "to begin the journey to-day, you had better therefore wait till to-morrow morning. In the mean time, as it is but proper that you should be informed of what has passed between the sultan of India and Prince Ahmed since our marriage, I will give you an account of everything this evening."

The next morning, when Schaibar had been informed of what it was not right he should be ignorant of, he began his journey very early, accompanied by Prince Ahmed, who was to present him to the sultan. They arrived at the capital, and Schaibar had no sooner appeared at the gate, than all who saw him were seized with fright at the appearance of so hideous a figure, and ran and hid themselves in their shops, or in their houses, the doors of which they instantly shut; others took flight, and communicated the same alarm to those they met, who instantly turned back without once looking behind them. In this manner, as Schaibar and Prince Ahmed advanced in a regular pace, they found the greatest solitude in all the streets through which they passed in their way to the palace. When they arrived there, the porters, instead of trying at least to prevent Schaibar from going in, endeavoured to save themselves on all sides, and left the entrance quite free. The prince and Schaibar, therefore, advanced without the least obstruction to the council hall, where the sultan was seated upon his throne giving audience; and as all the officers and attendants had abandoned their post as soon as Schaibar made his appearance, they entered without the least hindrance.

Schaibar, with his head erect, haughtily approached the throne, and without waiting for Prince Ahmed to present him, thus addressed the sultan: "Thou hast demanded my presence. See, here I am. What dost thou wish of me?"

The sultan, however, instead of answering, put his hands before his eyes, and turned them away, in order to avoid the sight of so dreadful an object. Schaibar was enraged at this uncivil and offensive reception, after he had taken the trouble of coming. He lifted up, therefore, his bar of iron, and exclaiming, "Wilt thou not speak then?" let it fall directly on his head, and crushed him to the earth. He did this before Prince Ahmed had the power of requesting his patience. It was now as much as he was able to do to prevent him from destroying the grand vizier, who was close to the sultan's right hand. And he prevailed upon him, only by representing that the advice he always gave the sultan his father, was very equitable and excellent. "Where then are they," exclaimed Schaibar, "who have given him such execrable advice?" And saying this, he destroyed all the other viziers who were on both sides the throne, and all the favourites and parasites of the sultan, who were the enemies of Prince Ahmed. In short, death followed every blow, and none escaped except those whose fear was not so powerful as to fix them to the very spot, and thus prevent them from saving their lives by flight.

Having completed this dreadful execution, Schaibar left the hall of audience, and went into the middle of the court with the bar of iron on his shoulder. "I

know there is," he cried, looking at the grand vizier, who accompanied Prince Ahmed, to whom he owed his life, "a certain enchantress, who is an enemy to the prince my brother-in-law, and even more so than these infamous favourites whom I have punished. Let her be brought before me." The grand vizier immediately sent for, and had her conducted thence, when Schaibar, as he crushed her with his bar of iron, said, "Learn the consequence of giving wicked advice and pretending sickness." The enchantress was instantly annihilated on the spot.

"This is not sufficient," exclaimed Schaibar. "I will destroy the whole city if Prince Ahmed, my brother-in-law, is not instantly acknowledged as the sultan of India." All those who were present, and who heard the determination, immediately made the air resound with "Long live sultan Ahmed," and in a short time the whole city echoed with the same sound. Schaibar next caused the prince to be clothed in the robes of the sultan, and had him instantly installed. And after having paid him homage, and taken an oath of fidelity and allegiance, he went for his sister Pari-banou, conducted her to the city in great pomp, and caused her to be acknowledged as sultana of India.

With respect to Prince Ali and the princess Nourounihar, as they had taken no part in the conspiracy against Prince Ahmed, who was thus so amply revenged, and indeed, as they were even ignorant of its existence, Prince Ahmed gave them a very considerable province, with its capital, for their establishment, where they went and passed the remainder of their days. He sent also an officer to Prince Houssain, his eldest brother, to announce the change that had taken place, and offered him the choice of any province in his kingdom in full sovereignty; but the prince was so happy in his retirement, that he requested the officer to return his sincerest thanks to the sultan, his youngest brother, for his good and kind intentions, to assure him of his entire submission to his interests, and to say that the only favour he requested, was to be permitted to pass the remainder of his life in the retreat he had chosen.

Scheherazade always contriving to detain the sultan in suspense with regard to the decision of her fate by the relation of her different stories, now began a new one; and addressed the sultan in these terms:

THE STORY OF THE TWO SISTERS WHO WERE JEALOUS OF THEIR YOUNGER SISTER.

THERE was once a prince of Persia, sire, named Khosrouschah, who, on his introduction into the world, used to amuse himself very frequently by seeking after adventures during the night: he often disguised himself, and accompanied by one of his confidential attendants likewise in disguise, he would visit different parts of the city, and sometimes met with many occurrences of an extraordinary nature, which I will not at present undertake to relate to your majesty; but I hope you will find some pleasure in listening to the account of what happened to him on the first excursion he made, a few days after he had ascended the throne of the sultan his father, who, dying at a very advanced age, left him sole heir of the kingdom of Persia.

After the customary ceremonies on his accession to the crown, and the funeral rites to the memory of his father, the new sultan, Khosrouschah, as much from a motive of duty as from inclination, that he might inspect what passed in his city, left his palace one night at about two hours after dark, accompanied by

his grand vizier, who was disguised like himself. Having strolled into a quarter of the city where only the common class of people resided, he heard as he passed through a street some voices talking very loud, and he approached the house whence the noise proceeded : looking through the crevice of a door, he perceived a light, and three sisters seated on a sofa, who were conversing together after supper. From the discourse of the eldest, he was soon informed that their wishes were the subject of it. "Since we are talking of wishes," said she, "mine is that I may have the sultan's baker for a husband : I should then eat as much as I liked of that delicious bread, which is called the 'sultan's bread ;' now let us hear if your taste is as good as mine." "My wish," replied the second sister, "would be to marry the cook of the sultan's kitchen ; I should then eat of such excellent dishes ; and as I am well persuaded that the sultan's bread is used in common in the palace, I should not want for that : you see, sister," continued she, addressing the elder one, "that my taste is quite as good as yours."

The youngest sister, who was extremely handsome, and possessed of much more wit and pleasantry than her eldest sisters, now spoke in her turn. "For my part," said she, "I do not limit my wishes to so low a standard ; I take a higher flight, and since we are about wishing, I should like to be the wife of the sultan himself ; and I would bet him a prince whose hair should be gold on one side and silver on the other : when he cried, the tears that dropped from his eyes should be pearls ; and when he smiled, his vermilion lips should appear like an opening rosebud."

The wishes of these three sisters, and particularly the latter, appeared to the sultan so singular that he resolved to gratify them ; without therefore communicating his design to the grand vizier, he desired him to take particular notice of the house, that he might come to fetch them on the following day, and conduct them before him.

The grand vizier, when he executed this order on the morrow, only afforded the three sisters time to dress themselves quickly, without saying anything more to them than that the sultan desired to see them. He took them to the palace, and when he presented them to the sultan, the latter said to them, "Tell me if you recollect the wishes you made yesterday evening, when you were all in such a pleasant humour ; do not dissemble, for I will know the truth."

At this question of the sultan the three sisters, who did not at all expect one of this nature, were in the utmost confusion ; they cast their eyes down, and the blushes which overspread their cheeks, added a lustre to their beauty, and to that of the youngest in particular, which completed her conquest over the heart of the sultan. As their natural modesty, together with the fear of having offended their sovereign by their late conversation, made them silent, the sultan, who perceived it, said in an encouraging manner, "Fear nothing, I have not sent for you here to give you pain ; and as I see that the question I ask you has, contrary to my intention, confused you, and as I also know each of your wishes, I will soon relieve you from embarrassment. You," added he, "who wished to be my wife, shall have your desire completed this very day ; and you," addressing the eldest and the second sister, "shall also have your wishes gratified, and I will have your nuptials solemnized with my baker and with my head cook."

As soon as the sultan had declared his will, the youngest, setting her sisters the example, threw herself at the feet of the sultan to express her gratitude. "Sire," said she, "my wish, since it is known to your majesty, was only expressed in a joke and mirth ; I am not worthy of the honour you confer on me, and I beg your pardon for my boldness and temerity." The other two sisters wanted also to excuse themselves, but the sultan interrupted them,

"No, no," said he, "I will hear of no excuses; the wish of each shall be gratified."

The nuptials were celebrated on that very day, as the sultan had decreed, but with far different ceremonies; those of the younger sister were accompanied with all the pomp and rejoicings, which were proper for the union of a sultan and sultana of Persia, while those of the other two sisters were solemnized with no greater festivities than might be expected from the situation of their husbands; that is to say, from the principal baker and the head cook of the sultan.

The two eldest sisters felt very forcibly the great disproportion that existed between their marriages and their younger sister's. Their reflections, far from making them contented with the good fortune that had befallen them according to their wishes, though far distant from their expectations, operated in a contrary way and created in them an excess of jealousy, which not only disturbed their own comfort, but also caused the utmost unhappiness to their younger sister, and in the end caused her the most mortifying and humiliating affliction. They had not yet had time to communicate to each other their sentiments on the preference which the sultan had given her over them; they had only leisure to prepare for the celebration of the marriage ceremonies. But when they had an opportunity of meeting some days after at a public bath, where they had made an appointment, "Well, sister," said the eldest to the other, "what think you of our youngest sister? Is not she a pretty lady for a sultana?" "I confess," replied the other, "that I do not understand it; I cannot conceive what charms the sultan could see in her to fascinate him thus; she is no better than a monkey, and you know as well as I do the appearance we have sometimes seen her present. Was it a sufficient reason for the sultan to prefer her to you, because she has a more youthful air than you have? You were worthy of his bed, and he ought to have done you the justice to give you the preference."

"Sister," replied the eldest, "do not let us speak of myself; I should have nothing to say if the sultan had made choice of you; but that he should fix his heart on that dirty wench drives me to despair. I will be revenged at all events, and you are as much interested as myself in the business. I therefore propose that you should join with me, that we may act together in a cause which concerns us equally, and that you should communicate to me anything that may occur to you, which will be likely to mortify her; and I on my part promise to acquaint you with anything that my desire to humble her may suggest to me."

After this malicious agreement, the two sisters saw each other frequently, and every time they met, their only conversation was on the means they should adopt to interrupt and even destroy the happiness of the sultana, their youngest sister. They proposed several plans, but when deliberating on the execution of them, they found such great difficulties that they did not venture to put them in practice. They, however, occasionally visited her together, and with the most cunning and malicious dissimulation, they lavished on her every mark of friendship and affection that they could devise, in order to persuade her how delighted they were to have a sister raised to so high a rank. The sultana, on her part, always received them with every mark of esteem and attention which they could expect from a sister who was not improperly clad with her newly-acquired dignity, but who still continued to love them with the same cordiality as before.

Some months after her marriage, the sultana became pregnant, an event which gave the sultan great pleasure: and a universal joy prevailed on the occasion, not only in the palace, but throughout the Persian dominions. The

two sisters also came to offer their congratulations, and to entreat her to employ no one except them to attend her in her approaching confinement. The sultana replied, "My dear sisters, I, as you may believe, should not make choice of any one else, if the matter rested entirely with me; I am infinitely obliged to you for your good wishes towards me, but I submit to whatever the sultan may command. You may, however, use all the interest your husbands possess at court, to have this favour requested of the sultan; and if he speaks to me on the subject, you may be certain that I shall not only express my satisfaction to him for conferring on me this pleasure, but shall also thank him for having made choice of you."

The two husbands each solicited the courtiers, who were their patrons, entreating them to employ their influence to obtain for their wives the honour they aspired to; and these patrons exerted themselves with so much diligence as well as success, that the sultan promised to think of it. He kept his word, and in a conversation he had with the sultana, he told her that he thought her sisters would be better than a strange woman to attend her in her lying-in, but that he would not appoint them to that office until he had previously obtained her consent. The sultana, sensible of the deference the sultan thus obligingly paid to her wishes, replied, "Sire, I am ready to do whatever your majesty will order me; but since you have had the goodness to cast your thoughts on my sisters, I must thank you for the preference you give to them for my sake; and I will not dissemble that I shall accept of their services with much greater satisfaction than if they were strangers."

The sultan Khosrouschah appointed the sisters of the sultana to attend her; and they in consequence immediately took up their residence in the palace, quite overjoyed at having found an opportunity of putting in practice the detestable wickedness which they had meditated against her.

The period at length arrived, and the sultana was delivered of a prince as beautiful as the morning; but neither his beauty nor the delicacy of his form was capable of softening the obdurate hearts of the two sisters. They wrapped him up very carelessly in some linen clothes, put him into a small basket, and exposed it with him to the current of a canal which passed under the apartment of the sultana; and they produced a little dead dog, asserting that the sultana had been delivered of it. This unpleasant intelligence was announced to the sultan, who felt on the occasion a degree of indignation, which might have proved fatal to the sultana, if his grand vizier had not represented to him, that he could not, without injustice, consider her as responsible for the caprices of nature.

The basket, in the mean time, with the prince in it, was conveyed by the current beyond a wall which bounded the view from the apartment of the sultana, but did not impede the course of the canal, which crossed the gardens of the palace. By chance, the superintendent of the gardens of the sultan, one of the principal and most respected officers in the kingdom, was walking in the garden on the banks of the canal, and as he observed the basket floating on the water, he called a gardener who was near. "Go quickly," said he, showing it to him, "and bring me that basket, that I may see what it contains." The gardener went immediately to the edge of the canal, and with the spade he had in his hand, he dexterously drew the basket towards him and took it out of the water.

The superintendent of the gardens was very much surprised to see a child wrapped up in linen in the basket; a child, too, who, though evidently just born, was nevertheless very beautiful. This officer had been married a considerable time, but, though very desirous of having a progeny, Heaven had not yet granted his wishes. He discontinued his walk, and desired the gardener

to follow him with the basket and child. When he had reached his house, which opened into the garden of the palace, he went immediately to the apartment of his wife. "My dear wife," said he, "we have no children; here is one that God sends us, and I recommend him to you. Send for a nurse for him as soon as possible, and take care of him as if he were our own son; from this moment I consider him as such." His wife joyfully took the child, and felt great pleasure in the charge. The superintendent of the gardens did not choose to investigate from whence the child could come. "I plainly see," said he to himself, "that it is from the apartment of the sultana; but it is not my business to oppose what passes there, nor to cause commotions in a place where peace is so necessary."

The following year the sultana was delivered of another prince. Her unnatural and inhuman sisters felt no more compassion for him than they had done for his elder brother, and they had him exposed in the same way, in a basket on the canal, and pretended that the sultana had produced a cat. Fortunately for the child, the superintendent of the gardens being near the canal at the time, had him taken out and carried to his wife, charging her to take the same care of that as of the former one, which she readily agreed to, not less from inclination than to comply with the good intentions of her husband.

The sultan of Persia felt still more indignant against the sultana for this second production than he had done before, and his anger and resentment would have burst forth had not the grand vizier again made use of the most persuasive remonstrances to appease him.

The sultana at length lay in a third time, not of a prince but of a daughter; the poor little innocent shared the same fate with the princes her brothers. The two sisters, who had resolved not to desist from their detestable design until they succeeded in reducing the sultana to the most humiliating situation, in making her despised and driven from her present state, treated the little princess in the same way, by exposing her on the canal. She was snatched from inevitable death by the charity and compassion of the superintendent, as the two princes her brothers had been, and with them she was nursed and educated.

To this inhuman action the two sisters added deceit and imposture, as on the former occasions. They showed a piece of wood, which they falsely affirmed to be a mole, of which the sultana had been delivered. The sultan Khosrouschah could not contain himself when he heard of this last extraordinary production. "This vile woman, so unworthy of my bed," said he, "will fill my palace with monsters if I suffer her to live any longer. No," added he, "this must not be; she is a monster herself, and I will rid the world of her." He thus pronounced the decree for her death, and commanded the grand vizier to see it executed.

The grand vizier and the courtiers, who were present, threw themselves at the feet of the sultan, entreating him to revoke the sentence. The former addressing him, said, "Sire, will your majesty allow me to represent to you that the laws which condemn to death have been established only for the punishment of crimes. The three strange and unexpected productions of the sultana cannot be deemed such. How can she be accused of having contributed to them? An infinite number of women have met with the same misfortune, and examples daily occur of such events; they are to be pitied, but they are not punishable. Your majesty may desist from seeing her, yet still suffer her to live. The affliction in which she will pass the remainder of her days, after having lost your favour, will be a sufficient atonement for the offence."

The sultan of Persia yielded to these arguments, and as he plainly saw the

injustice of condemning to death a sultana for having miscarried, for thus he was induced to believe, "Let her live then," cried he; "but I grant her life only on a condition which will make her wish for death more than once every day. There shall be erected a sort of wooden cage or prison at the gate of the principal mosque, one of the windows of which shall be always open. She shall be shut up in it, dressed in a coarse habit, and every Mussulman who goes to the mosque to say his prayers shall spit in her face as he passes. If any one fails in complying with this order, he shall be exposed to the same punishment. And that I may be punctually obeyed, I command you, vizier, to appoint proper persons to see it executed."

The tone of voice in which the sultan pronounced this last decree silenced the grand vizier. It was executed, to the great satisfaction of the two jealous sisters. The building was erected; when completed, the sultana, truly worthy of compassion, was confined in it as soon as she was recovered from her lying-in, in the way the sultan had commanded, and ignominiously exposed to the contempt and ridicule of the common people; a treatment which in fact she had not deserved, but which she bore with a firmness and patience that attracted the admiration, and at the same time the compassion of all those who judged of circumstances in their proper light.

The two princes and the princess were brought up by the superintendent of the gardens and his wife with parental tenderness; and this affection increased as they advanced in age, from the greatness of mind which displayed itself in the brothers as well as sister, but above all from the extreme beauty of the latter, who every day unfolded new charms: from their docility, their inclinations, so much above the trifling pursuits of children in general, and from a certain air and manner, which plainly indicated their rank. In order to distinguish the two princes according to their age, they named the first Bahman, and the second Perviz, both names of some of the ancient kings of Persia. The princess they called Parizade, also after some of the Persian queens and princesses.

When the princes were of a proper age, the superintendent of the gardens provided them with a master to teach them to read and write; and the princess their sister, who was present when they took their lessons, showed so great a desire to learn also, though younger than her brothers, that the superintendent, delighted with the disposition he saw in her to improve herself, gave her the same master. Her vivacity and quick penetration soon excited in her a desire to excel, and in a short time she became as clever as her brothers.

From that time the two princes and their sister had the same masters in other sciences, such as geography, poetry, and history; and also in the occult sciences. And as they had wonderful facility in learning, they made so great a progress that their masters were astonished, and soon confessed, without hesitation, that they, in a short time, would go beyond what they themselves knew. In their hours of recreation the princes learnt to sing, and play on several instruments. When the princes began to ride on horseback, she would not suffer them to have even this advantage over her; she exercised herself with them, so that she knew the whole art of horsemanship, of archery, of throwing the javelin, and often also excelled them in the race.

The superintendent, who was highly delighted to see his adopted children so accomplished in every bodily as well as mental excellence, that they fully recompensed him for the expense he had been at in their education, even beyond his most sanguine expectations, formed a more extensive plan for their accommodation and pleasure. Till then, contented with his residence in the centre of the garden of the palace, he had lived without having a country house: he now

purchased one at a little distance from the city, which had a good deal of ground annexed, consisting of fields, meadows, and woods; and as the house did not appear to him sufficiently handsome or convenient, he had it pulled down, and spared no expense to render it the most magnificent habitation in the neighbourhood. He went there every day, that by his presence he might excite the great number of workmen he employed to be expeditious; and as soon as an apartment was completed for his reception, he passed several days there at a time, and indeed as much as the functions and duties of his office would allow. At length, by continued assiduity on his part, the house was finished; and while it was being furnished with equal despatch in the most elegant style, corresponding with the richness and magnificence of the edifice, he had the garden laid out according to a design which he had himself planned, and in the manner which the nobles of Persia usually adopt. He added to it a park of vast extent, which he had enclosed with substantial walls, and furnished with all kinds of animals for the chase, that the princes and their sister might take the diversion of hunting whenever they liked.

When this house was entirely completed and ready to be inhabited, the superintendent of the gardens went to throw himself at the feet of the sultan; and after having represented to him the length of time he had been in his service, and the infirmities of age which were advancing on him, he entreated him to grant him permission to resign his office into the hands of his majesty, and retire. The sultan granted him this favour with so much the greater pleasure, as he was well satisfied with his services, for he had been in office, not only during his own reign, but also while his father was on the throne, and in giving him his dismissal, he asked him what he could do to recompense him. "Sir," replied the superintendent, "I am so overwhelmed with the favours I have received from your majesty, as well as from the sultan your father of happy memory, that I have now nothing to desire but that I may die with your good opinion." He then took his leave of the sultan; after which he removed to the country house he had built, with the two princes Bahman and Perviz, and the princess Parzadé. His wife had been dead some years. He had not fixed his residence here with them longer than five or six months, when he was taken from them by a death so sudden, that he had not even time to acquaint them with the true circumstances of their birth; a thing which, however, he had resolved on doing, as a necessary inducement to them to continue to live as they had hitherto done, according to their rank and condition, and in conformity with the education he had given them, and the natural inclinations they evinced.

The princes Bahman and Perviz, and their sister Parzadé, who knew no other father than the superintendent of the gardens, mourned him as a parent, and performed all the funeral duties which filial affection and gratitude required of them. Perfectly satisfied with the possessions he had bequeathed them, they continued to live together in the same union which they had hitherto preserved, the princes feeling no ambition to appear at court, or to aspire to those principal offices and dignities which they might easily have acquired.

One day, when the two brothers were hunting, and Parzadé had remained at home, a Mussulman devotee, who was very aged, presented herself at the gate, and entreated permission to enter and repeat her prayer, as it was the hour for it. The princess was asked if she would consent to it, and she ordered her to be admitted and shown into the oratory, which had been erected by the superintendent in the house, as there was no mosque in the neighbourhood. She also desired, when the devotee had finished her prayer, she might be taken over the house and gardens, and then conducted to her.

The devotee went in, and repeated her prayer in the oratory; when she had

done, two of the princess's women, who were waiting for her to come out, invited her to see the house and gardens. As she said she was ready to follow them, they took her through all the apartments, in each of which she observed everything as if she understood the value of the furniture and the proper arrangement of each room. They also went with her into the gardens, the design of which she thought so new and well disposed, that she admired it very much; and observed, that he who laid it out must have been a great master in the art. She was at last conducted before the princess, who was waiting for her in the large saloon, which, in beauty, elegance, and richness, surpassed all that she had been shown in the other apartments.

As soon as the princess saw the devotee enter the saloon, "My good mother," said she, "come here and sit by me; I am very happy in the opportunity which chance affords me of profiting for some minutes from the good example and conversation of a person like you, who have taken the right path by devoting yourself entirely to God, and whom every one that is wise should also follow."

The devotee, instead of going upon the sofa, would have seated herself at the edge of it, but the princess would not suffer her; she rose from her place, and going towards her, took her by the hand, and obliged her to sit near her, in the place of honour. The devotee was sensible of this civility, and said to her, "Madam, I ought not to be treated thus honourably, and I only obey you, because you command it, and are mistress in your own house." When she was seated, before they began to converse, one of the princess's women placed before them a small low table, inlaid with mother-of-pearl and ebony, with a basin of porcelain on it, containing a variety of cakes, and some smaller dishes, with the fruits that were in season, together with sweetmeats, both liquid and dry.

The princess took one of the cakes, and presenting it to the devotee, "Take and eat this, my good mother," said she, "and choose whatever fruit you like; you must want food, after the long walk you have had to come here." "Madam," replied the devotee, "I am not accustomed to eat such delicate things; and if I take them, it is only not to refuse what God sends me through such liberal hands." Whilst the devotee was eating, the princess, who also ate something by way of setting her the example, asked her several questions on the devotional exercises she practised, and the manner in which she lived; to all which she replied with great humility. Led on from one subject to another, the princess at length asked her what she thought of the house she was in, and whether it suited her taste.

"Madam," replied the devotee, "I must have a very bad taste to find any fault in it. It is elegant, cheerful, richly furnished, and the decorations are managed with great judgment. It is situated in pleasant grounds, and it is impossible to conceive a garden more delightful than that which belongs to it. If, however, you will permit me not to dissemble, I must take the liberty to tell you, that the house would be incomparable if three things, which, in my opinion, are wanting, were assembled." "My good woman," replied Parizade, "what are these three things? I entreat you in the name of God to inform me; I will spare nothing to procure them, if it be possible."

"Madam," returned the devotee, "the first of these three things is the talking bird. It is a very uncommon bird, called Bulbulhezar, which has also the property of attracting all the singing birds in the vicinity, which come to accompany its song. The second is the singing tree, the leaves of which are so many mouths, that constantly form an harmonious concert of different voices, that never cease. The third and last is the water of the colour of gold, one single drop of which dropped into a basin made for the purpose in any part of a garden, increases so rapidly, that it immediately fills it, and then rises in the

middle in a sort of fountain, which never ceases springing up and falling into the basin without ever running over."

"Ah, my good mother," cried the princess, "how much am I obliged to you for having told me of these things! They are astonishing, and I never heard that the world contained anything so curious and wonderful; but as I am sure that you know the place where they may be found, I hope you will do me the favour to inform me of it."

In order to satisfy the princess, the devotee replied, "I should be unworthy, madam, of the hospitality you have so bounteously shown me, if I refused to gratify your curiosity on what you are so desirous of being informed. Allow me then the honour of telling you, that the three things I have just mentioned, are all to be found in the same place, on the confines of this kingdom, and on the side next India. The road which leads to it passes by your house; whoever you send to procure them has only to follow this road for twenty days, and on the twentieth let him ask where the talking bird, the singing tree, and the golden water, are, and the first person he meets will point it out to him." As she finished these words she rose; and having taken her leave, she went away, and continued her journey.

Princess Parizadé had her mind so occupied with attending to the instructions which the Mussulman devotee had given her, on the subject of the talking bird, the singing tree, and the golden water, that she did not perceive she was gone until she wanted to ask her some questions, to render the information more clear. She did not, in fact, think that what she had just heard was sufficiently explanatory to authorise her taking a journey that might be useless. She would not, however, send after her to make her return, but she endeavoured to recollect all that she had said, and to impress it on her memory, so that nothing might escape it. When she thought that she was perfectly sure of every circumstance, she reflected with the greatest satisfaction on the pleasure she should experience if she could arrive at the possession of such wonderful things; but the difficulties that occurred, and the fear of not succeeding in the undertaking, filled her with uneasiness.

Parizadé was absorbed in these considerations when the princes her brothers returned from the chase; they entered the saloon, and instead of finding her with an open countenance and cheerful temper, according to her usual custom, they were surprised to see her meditating as if some affliction had befallen her, and not even raising her head to indicate that she perceived them to be present.

Prince Bahman was the first to speak. "Sister," said he, "where are the cheerfulness and gaiety which have hitherto been inseparably your companions? Are you unwell? Has any misfortune befallen you? Has anything afflicted you? Tell us, that we may participate in your grief, and apply some remedy; or that we may revenge you, if any one has had the temerity to offend you."

The princess remained for some time without making any reply, or altering her position. At length, she raised her eyes, and looked at the princes her brothers; then casting them down again almost immediately, she said that it was nothing.

"Sister," replied Prince Bahman, "you do not tell us the truth; something must be the matter, and something too of a serious nature. It is not possible that in the short time we have been absent from you, so great and unexpected a change as that we observe in you, can have happened without a cause. You must allow us to be incredulous about an answer which is so far from satisfactory. Do not then conceal from us what occasions this behaviour, unless you wish us to believe that you renounce entirely that friendship and union which have ever until now subsisted amongst us."

The princess, who was very far from wishing to quarrel with her brothers,

did not choose to let them remain of this opinion. "When I told you," she said, "that what gave me uneasiness was of no moment, I meant only with respect to you, and not as relative to myself, who certainly consider it of some importance; but since you press me to explain it, and urge it under the right of friendship, and the connexion there is between us, I will tell you what it is.

"You thought, as I did also, that this house, which our late respected father built for us, was quite complete, and that there was not one single thing wanting; I have, however, been informed to-day, that there are three things which would set it beyond comparison with respect to every other country house that is in the whole world. These are the talking bird, the singing tree, and the golden water." After having explained to them in what their several excellences consisted, she went on, and said, "A devotee of our holy religion is the person who has observed this; and she has informed me of the place where they are to be found, and the way that leads to them. You may think, perhaps, that these things, which are requisite to make our habitation excel all others, are of little consequence, and that it will always be esteemed a very handsome one, notwithstanding the want of this acquisition; and that we can very well do without them. You may think on this subject as you please; but I cannot help telling you, that, with respect to myself, I am persuaded they are absolutely necessary, and shall not feel satisfied till I see them placed here. Whether, therefore, you take any interest or not in the things themselves, I request you to assist me with your advice, and point out some one whom I can employ to obtain them."

"Nothing, sister," replied Prince Bahman, "that interests you can be indifferent to us. It is enough that you are anxious to possess these three things you mention, in order to engage us to take the same interest. But independent of what we feel on your account, we must ourselves be anxious for them. I am well satisfied my brother is of the same opinion as myself. We ought therefore to do everything in our power to procure them; and indeed the singularity and importance of the things themselves fully deserve that appellation. I then will take this charge. Tell me only the road I am to go, and the place where they are to be found, and I will not defer my journey longer than to-morrow."

"Brother," said Prince Perviz, "it is not proper that you should absent yourself from home for so long a time; you are our chief and support, and I must request my sister to join with me in desiring you to relinquish this design, and let me undertake the journey; I will endeavour to acquit myself as well as you would, and it will also be much more proper." "I am well satisfied of your good intentions, brother," replied Prince Bahman, "and am sure you would not execute the business worse than I should; but the matter is determined, I will go, and nothing shall prevent me; you will remain with our sister, whom it is not necessary to recommend to your particular care." The remainder of the day was passed in making preparations for the journey, and in being instructed by the princess in the different signs and observations that the devotee had given, that no one might mistake the road.

Very early the next morning, Prince Bahman mounted his horse, and Prince Perviz and his sister, who were anxious to see him set off, embraced him, and wished him a prosperous journey. At the very instant of their saying farewell, the princess recollected an objection that till now had not struck her. "Until this moment, my brother," she exclaimed, "I did not reflect upon the various accidents to which people are exposed in their travels; who knows whether I shall ever see you again? Descend, therefore, I conjure you, and do not undertake this journey; I would infinitely rather deprive myself of the talking bird, the singing tree, and the golden water, than run the least risk of losing you for ever."

"Sister," replied Prince Bahman, smiling at the sudden alarm of Parizade, "my resolution is taken, and even were that not the fact, I would take it again, and you should see that I would execute it. The accidents you speak of happen only to the unfortunate. It is true that I may be among that number; but I may also be among the successful, and they form a much more numerous class than the former. As, however, events of this kind are in their nature uncertain, and as I may fail in my enterprise, all that I can now do is to give you this knife."

Prince Bahman then took out a knife, and presented it in its case to the princess. "Take this," added he, "and occasionally give yourself the trouble to draw it out of its case, and as long as you shall find it clean and bright as it is now, it will be a certain sign that I am alive; but if you shall ever see any drops of blood fall from it, you may be assured I am no longer living, and you may pray for my repose."

This was the only thing that the princess could obtain from Prince Bahman. He then took his leave of her and his brother for the last time; and being well mounted, armed, and equipped, set out. He proceeded straight forward on his journey without deviating either to the right or left, and continued to traverse the kingdom of Persia. On the twentieth day of his journey, he perceived a most hideous old man by the side of the road. He was seated at the foot of a tree at a little distance from a cottage, which served him as a retreat against the inclemency of the weather.

His eyebrows were like snow, as was also his hair, his moustaches, and his beard, and they reached to the end of his nose; his moustaches quite covered his mouth, while his beard, equally white with his hair, fell almost to his feet. The nails of his hands and feet were of an excessive length. And he wore a sort of large and flat hat on his head, that served as an umbrella. The remainder of his dress was comprised in a single mat, that was wrapped entirely round him.

This strange old man, however, was a dervise, who had for many years retired from the world and neglected his own concerns, in order to attach himself more strongly to the service of God; so that at last he had become the curious figure we have just described.

Prince Bahman had been very attentive from the break of day in observing whether he met any one that could describe the place which he was in search of; he stopped, therefore, when he came near the dervise, who was in fact the first person he had met, and immediately dismounted, that he might in every particular conform to what the devotee had told the princess. He advanced towards the dervise, while he held his horse by the bridle, and addressed him in these words: "May God, my good father, prolong your days, and grant you the accomplishment of your wishes."

The dervise saluted the prince in return, but spoke so unintelligibly that he could not understand a single word. As the prince observed that the obstacle arose from the moustaches of the dervise, which quite covered his mouth, and as he did not wish to proceed without getting the information he wanted, he took a pair of scissors with which he was provided, and after fastening his horse to the branch of a tree, he said to him, "My good dervise, I have something to say to you, but your moustaches prevent me from understanding you in return; I should be much obliged to you to suffer me to cut both those and your eyebrows, which absolutely disfigure you, and make you resemble a bear more than a man."

The dervise made no opposition to the design of the prince, but suffered him to do as he wished. And as Bahman saw when he had finished that the dervise had a fresh and clear skin, and appeared much younger than he in reality was,

he said to him, "If I had a mirror, my good dervise, I would let you see how much younger you appear. You are now a man, but no person could distinguish before what you were." The compliments of Prince Bahman excited a smile in the countenance of the dervise. "Whoever you are, sir," said the dervise to him, "I am much obliged to you for the good office you have done me, and I am ready to show my gratitude in whatever is in my power. You would not have dismounted unless you were in want of something: inform me what it is, and I will endeavour to satisfy you if I am able." "My good dervise," replied the prince, "I come from a considerable distance, and am in search of the talking bird, the singing tree, and the golden water. I know that these three things are somewhere in this neighbourhood, but I am ignorant of the precise spot. If you are acquainted with it, I entreat you to show me the way to it, that I may make no mistake, and thus lose the fruit of the long journey I have undertaken."

As the prince addressed these words to the dervise, he observed that he changed colour, cast his eyes on the ground, and put on a most serious countenance, and then, instead of making any reply, he remained silent. He therefore resumed his speech, and added, "I think, my good father, that you understand what I say. Tell me, then, whether you know what I ask you, that if you are ignorant of it, I may not lose any more time, but go and seek somewhere else for the information." The dervise at last broke silence. "Sir," said he, "the road you inquire for is well known to me; but the friendship I conceived for you the instant I beheld you, and which is much increased by the service you have rendered me, holds me in suspense, and makes me uncertain whether I ought to grant you the satisfaction you require." "What motive can hinder you?" replied the prince; "what difficulty can you have in giving it me?" "I will tell you," answered the dervise; "it is the danger to which you will be exposed, and which is infinitely greater than you can possibly imagine. A great many other persons besides you, and some who did not possess less courage or perseverance than you seem to have, have passed this place, and have asked me the same questions which you have done. After I had used all my endeavours and persuasions to prevent them from proceeding, they have, nevertheless, paid no regard to whatever I could say. I have at last, although against my inclination, informed them of the road, at their repeated entreaties, and I can assure you that every one of them has been destroyed, and I have not seen one individual return. If, therefore, you have the least regard for your life, and will follow my advice, you will not proceed a step further, but immediately return home."

Prince Bahman, however, persisted in his determination. "I am willing to believe," he said to the dervise, "that your advice is sincere, and I feel myself obliged to you for this proof of your friendship; but however great the danger may be of which you speak, neither that nor anything else is capable of making me alter my resolution. If any one should attack me I have good arms to defend myself, and he will not possess greater courage than myself." "Those, however, who will attack," replied the dervise, "for they consist of more than one, are not to be seen. How then can you defend yourself from invisible beings?" "All this is of no consequence," cried the prince; "whatever you may say to me, will not persuade me to act contrary to my duty. Since you are acquainted with the road I inquire, I once more entreat you to inform me of it, and not refuse me this favour."

When the dervise found that he could make no impression upon the mind of Prince Bahman, and that he continued obstinately determined to proceed on his journey, notwithstanding the good advice he gave him, he put his hand into a bag that lay by the side of him, and took out a bowl, which he presented

to the prince. "Since I cannot persuade you," said the dervise, "to pay any attention to what I have said, and profit by my advice, take this bowl, and as soon as you shall have again mounted your horse, throw it before you, and follow it till you come to the foot of a mountain, where it will stop. When there you must dismount, and you may leave your horse with his bridle over his neck, as he will remain in that spot until you come back. As you ascend the mountain, you will see both on the right and left of you a great quantity of large black stones, and you will hear on all sides a confusion of voices that will abuse you, and say a thousand injurious things in order to discourage you, and prevent your reaching the top; but do you be particularly careful not to be alarmed, and above all things be sure not to turn your head to look behind you, for if you do, at that very moment you will be changed into a black stone, such as those you see about you, and which in fact are so many men, who, like you, have undertaken this enterprise, but as I have told you, have failed in the attempt. If you overcome this danger, which I assure you I cannot describe in terms sufficiently strong, and on which I would have you reflect very seriously, and arrive at the top of the mountain, you will there find a cage in which the talking bird is confined that you are in search of. As it speaks, you must ask it where the singing tree is, and also the golden water, and it will inform you. I have now nothing more to say; you know what you have to do, and what to avoid; but if you will depend upon me you will follow the advice I have given you, and not expose yourself to the loss of your life. Once again, while there still remains an opportunity for you to reflect, consider well that this loss is irreparable, and depends upon a condition you must not violate, should you, through inadvertence, subject yourself to it, as you may easily understand."

"The advice which you have now repeated, and for which I must ever feel myself obliged to you," replied Prince Bahman, after he had taken the bowl. "I cannot think of following, but I will endeavour to profit by what you say, and I hope you will soon see me return, and I shall thank you still more gratefully when laden with the spoils I am in search of." Having said thus much, to which the dervise returned no other answer than that he wished him success, and should see him return with great pleasure, the prince mounted his horse, took leave of the dervise, and then threw the bowl before him.

The bowl continued to roll on with the same celerity with which Prince Bahman first threw it forward; in order, therefore, to follow, and not lose sight of it, he was obliged to accommodate the pace of his horse exactly as it went forward. He continued close behind it, and when it came to the foot of the mountain the dervise mentioned, it stopped, and the prince dismounted. He did not fasten his horse, which indeed did not stir from the spot even when he threw the bridle on its neck. When he had cast his eyes round the mountain as far as he could, and had observed the black stones, he began to ascertain, and had not proceeded more than four or five steps before he heard the voices which the dervise mentioned, although he could see no one. Some said, "What is the fool about? Where is he going? What does he want? Don't let him pass." Others cried, "Stop him; seize him; murder him." While a third party, in voices like thunder, exclaimed, "Oh, the thief, the assassin, the murderer." Some, on the contrary, called out in a tone of raillery, "No, no, do not hurt him, let the pretty fellow pass, he is the very person for whom the cage and bird are kept."

Notwithstanding these tiresome and importunate exclamations, Prince Bahman continued for some time to ascend with great fortitude and perseverance, encouraging himself to go on. But the voices kept increasing, and the noise became so great, and appeared so near, and surrounding him, that he

began to be very much alarmed. His feet and legs trembled under him, he felt himself faint; and as soon as he found that his strength began to fail, he forgot the advice of the dervise, and turned round in order to descend and save himself, when he was instantly changed into a black stone,—a transformation that had happened to many others before him who had attempted the same enterprise. His horse also underwent a similar change.

Ever since Prince Bahman first set out on this expedition, Princess Parizade had constantly worn the knife with its case at her girdle, in order to inform herself whether her brother was alive or dead, nor had she ever omitted to consult it several times during the day. She had in this manner the consolation of learning that he was in perfect health; and she also frequently talked of him with Prince Perviz, who was equally anxious as herself to learn some news of him.

At length, on the fatal day that Bahman was changed into the black stone, as the prince and princess were as usual conversing about him in the evening: "Pray, sister," said Perviz, "take the knife out, and let us see how our brother is." She did so, and looking at its blade, they saw the blood run from the point. Struck with horror at this sight, the princess threw down the knife. "Alas, my dearest brother," she exclaimed, "I have then destroyed you entirely through my own fault. Never shall I see you more. How wretched I am! Why did I mention to you the talking bird, the singing tree, or the golden water? or rather of what consequence was it to me to know the opinion the devotee had formed of this house and grounds, and whether she thought them beautiful or ugly, well-furnished or otherwise? Would to God that she had never thought of addressing herself to me. Hypocritical and deceitful wretch!" she exclaimed. "is it thus thou hast repaid the reception I afforded thee? Why didst thou speak to me of a bird, of a tree, and of a water, which I now believe to be ideal things only, through the unfortunate death of my dearest brother, and yet which I cannot, through thy enchantment, imagine as they are, drive from my mind."

Prince Perviz was not less afflicted by the loss of his brother, than was the princess; but without losing his time in useless complaints, and as he understood from his sister's lamentations that she still most ardently wished to obtain the talking bird, singing tree, and golden water, he interrupted her, and said, "All our sorrow and regret for the death of Prince Bahman are unavailing, neither our tears nor our affliction will bring him to life. It is the will of God, and we ought to submit to it. Let us adore his dispensations, whether of good or ill, and not endeavour to penetrate into the cause of them. Why should we, at this moment, doubt the words of the devotee, after having hitherto supposed them perfectly just and true? Why should we think she spoke of three things that did not exist, and merely invented them to amuse and deceive you, who so far from giving her any cause, had received and entertained her with so much liberality and kindness? Let us rather suppose that the death of my brother arose from his own fault, or from some accident, for which we are unable to account. Let not, therefore, his death, my sister, prevent us from pursuing our inquiry. I at first offered to undertake the journey instead of him. I am still willing to do it; and as his example and fate does not in the least make me alter my opinion, I will set out to-morrow morning."

The princess did all she could in order to dissuade Prince Perviz, begging him not to expose himself to the danger, lest she might, instead of one, have to lament the loss of two brothers. He continued, however, inflexible, notwithstanding any remonstrances she could make. But before he set out, that she might be informed of the success of his expedition, as she had been in the

instance of Prince Bahman, by means of the knife he had left her, he gave her a chaplet, consisting of a hundred pearls, for the same purpose. And as he presented it to her, he said, "Tell over this chaplet during my absence for this purpose; and if, in telling it, it should happen that the pearls are set fast, so that you cannot move them, or make them go over each other, as if they were glued, it will be a sign that I have experienced the same fate as my brother; but let us hope that this will not happen, and that I shall again have the happiness of seeing you with all the satisfaction we both can wish."

Prince Perviz began his journey, and on the twentieth day he met the same dervise, exactly in the same spot where Prince Bahman had found him. He went up to him, and having saluted him, requested him, if he knew, to inform him of the place where the talking bird, the singing tree, and the golden water were to be found. The dervise made the same difficulties, and urged the same remonstrances as in the instance of Prince Bahman; and even told him that not long since a person of the same age, and who bore a great likeness to him, had come and asked the road, and that overcome by his pressing entreaties and importunities, he had shown him the way, and had given him something as a guide, and told him every particular that he ought to follow in order to succeed; but that he had never seen him return, and he had therefore no doubt that he had experienced the same fate as those who had gone before.

"My good dervise," replied Prince Perviz, "I now the person you mention very well. He was my elder brother, and I am informed, for a certainty, that he is dead. But of what nature his death was I am ignorant." "I can tell you, then," replied the dervise; "he has been changed into a black stone, like those I have mentioned to you; and you may expect the same transformation, unless you follow more accurately than he did, all the advice I have given you, if you persist in proceeding with what I so earnestly exhorted you to desist from, and concerning which I still beg you to alter your resolution."

"Dervise," said Prince Perviz, "I cannot sufficiently prove to you how much I feel indebted for the interest you take in the preservation of my life, notwithstanding I am so much a stranger to you, and have done nothing to deserve your kindness: but I must inform you, that I thought very seriously on the subject, before I undertook this expedition, and that I cannot now abandon it. I entreat you, therefore, to do me the same favour you showed my brother. I perhaps shall succeed better than he has done in adhering to the same advice which I am now waiting for from you." "Since, then, I cannot accomplish my wishes by persuading you to change your resolution," said the dervise, "and if my great age did not prevent my rising, I would get up and give you a bowl, which will serve you as a guide."

Without troubling the dervise to say any more, Prince Perviz dismounted, and as he approached him, the latter took a bowl out of the bag, in which there were a great many more, and giving it the prince, told him how to make use of it, as he had before informed Prince Bahman; and after having warned him to be very careful, and not regard or be alarmed at the voices he would hear, without being able to see any one, however threatening they might be, he desired him to continue ascending, until he perceived the cage and the bird. The dervise then bid him farewell.

Prince Perviz thanked the dervise, and as soon as he had mounted his horse, he threw the bowl before him, and then spurring his animal, he continued to follow it. He at length arrived at the foot of the mountain, and when he saw the bowl stop he dismounted. Before he began to ascend, he waited a moment to consider and recall to his memory all the advice and precaution the dervise had given him. He then called forth his courage, and went up quite determined to reach the top of the mountain. He had hardly proceeded above five

or six paces, before he heard a voice close behind him, like that of a man calling to and insulting him. "Stop, adventurous wretch," it exclaimed, "until I punish thy audacity."

At this insulting menace, Prince Perviz forgot the advice of the dervise, seized his sabre, and drew it. He then turned round to revenge the insult; he had scarcely time to see that no one followed him, before both he and his horse were changed into black stones.

From the moment Prince Perviz had set out, Parizade did not omit to put her hand to the chaplet she had received from him the day before his departure, every time she was not otherwise employed, and to count over the pearls with her fingers. Nor did she even part from it during the night. Every evening when she retired to rest, she put it round her neck; and when she awoke in the morning, the first thing she did was to feel it, in order to know if the different pearls were loose. At length the fatal day and hour arrived, when Prince Perviz experienced the same fate as his brother Prince Bahman had done—that of being changed into a black stone; and as the princess as usual held the chaplet, and began to count it, she suddenly perceived that the pearls no longer yielded to her efforts, but were stationary, and she then became too well assured of the death of the prince her brother.

As she had already formed her resolution as to the part she intended to take, if this unfortunate event happened, she did not waste her time in giving any external marks of sorrow. She made the greatest effort to confine the feelings to her own bosom; and the next morning, disguised as a man, and well armed and equipped, after first telling her attendants that she should return in a few days, she set out, and pursued the same road as the two princes, her brothers, had done.

The princess, who had been very much accustomed to ride on horseback in taking the diversion of hunting, supported the fatigue of the journey much better than most other females would have done. As she travelled exactly at the same rate her brothers had done, she also met the dervise on the twentieth day of her journey, as they had done. As soon as she was near enough to him, she alighted; and, holding her horse by the bridle, she went and sat down close to him. "Will you suffer me, my good dervise," she said to him, "to rest myself a little while near you; and will you also do me the favour to inform me, whether there is not some place in this neighbourhood, where there is a talking bird, a singing tree, and some golden water?" "Madam," replied the dervise, "for your voice evidently tells me you are not of our sex, although you are disguised as a man, and therefore it is as a female that I ought to address you, I accept the compliment you pay me with great pleasure. I do know the place where the things are which you mention; but for what reason do you ask this question?" "I have heard such an extraordinary account of them," answered the princess, "that I am anxious beyond measure to possess them." "You are right, madam," said the dervise; these things are more wonderful and singular than it is possible they should have been described to you; but you probably have not been informed of the difficulties that must be overcome in order to acquire them. You would not, indeed, have engaged in so painful and dangerous an undertaking, if you had been better informed. Believe me, therefore, and do not proceed any farther. Return, and do not expect that I shall contribute to your destruction."

"My good father," replied the princess, "I come from a great distance, and I should be exceedingly sorry to return home without having put my design in execution. You tell me of difficulties and dangers, but you do not say in what these difficulties consist, and whence these dangers arise. This is what I wish to know, that I may consider and examine whether I may rely on my own strength and courage, or give up the enterprise."

The dervise then related to the princess everything he had before told Prince Bahman and Prince Perviz, and he even exaggerated the difficulties that existed in ascending to the top of the mountain, where the bird was in its cage, and of which it was necessary to acquire the possession, as from that she would learn where the tree and golden water were to be found. He mentioned the great noise of dreadful and menacing voices which she would hear on all sides of her, without seeing any one, and also the quantity of black stones; an object which was alone sufficient to alarm and dismay every one, when they knew that these stones were, in fact, only so many gallant men, who had been thus transformed, because they did not strictly observe the principal condition necessary for the success of this enterprise, and which consisted in not turning the head in order to look back, previous to obtaining possession of the cage.

When the dervise had finished his account the princess addressed him as follows: "From what I understand by your speech, the great difficulty of succeeding in this enterprise consists, in the first place, in the alarm and astonishment that is excited by the noise and din of different voices, without the appearance of any one, in ascending the mountain to the spot where the cage is placed; and in the second place, in avoiding to look behind you. With respect to this last condition, I trust I shall be sufficiently mistress of myself to observe it most carefully. And in regard to the first, I freely own to you that these voices, as you represent them, are capable of alarming the most confident and steady. But as in all enterprises of importance and danger, we are not prohibited from making use of any kind of address or stratagem, I ask you whether I may not do the same in this instance, which is so very important to me?" "What do you wish to make use of?" replied the dervise. "It appears to me," the princess continued, "that by stopping one's ears with cotton, these voices, however strong and alarming they may be, will make much less impression; and as they will thus also produce a less effect upon my imagination, my mind will be more at ease, and I shall not be so disturbed as to be likely to lose the use of my reason."

"Of all those, madam," said the dervise, "who have hitherto addressed themselves to me in order to be informed of the road you have also inquired about, I know not of any one who has made use of the means you have mentioned to me. All I know is, that not one has proposed the thing to me, and that all have perished. If, then, you persist in your intention, you may try it, and fortunate will you be if you are successful; but I advise you not to expose yourself to the danger."

"My good father," replied the princess, "there is nothing that can prevent me from persevering in my design. My heart tells me that my plan will succeed; and I am resolved on making use of the means I mentioned. Nothing therefore now remains, but to learn from you what road I must take; and this is a favour I must entreat you not to refuse me." The dervise again exhorted her, and for the last time, to consider well of the enterprise, but as he found she was resolutely fixed on the attempt, he took out a bowl and presented it to her, with the same directions he had before given to her brothers.

Princess Parizade remounted her horse, having first thanked and taken leave of the dervise. She threw the bowl before her, and followed it as it proceeded along its road, till it came to the foot of the mountain, where it stopped. She then alighted, and stuffed her ears with cotton. Having considered for a short time what was the path she was to pursue in order to arrive at the top of the mountain, she began to ascend with a steady pace and an undaunted mind. She indeed heard the voices, but found that the cotton was of considerable assistance to her. The farther she advanced, the louder and more numerous the voices became; but they did not make a sufficient impression to disturb her.

She heard various injurious expressions and satirical remarks alluding to her sex; these, however, she completely despised, and the only effect they had was to excite her laughter. "Neither your reproaches nor your raillery," she said to herself, "offend me. Proceed and say your worst, I shall only think them ridiculous; and you will not prevent me from pursuing my way." She at length ascended so high, that she perceived the cage and the bird, which joined itself with the other voices in endeavouring to intimidate her, calling out in a thundering tone, although it was so small in itself, "Go back, fool; do not approach!"

Animated still more by this sight, the princess doubled her speed. And when she found herself so near the end of her journey, and had gained the top of the mountain, where the ground was level, she ran directly to the cage, and laying her hand upon it, she exclaimed, "I have you now, in spite of yourself; and you shall never escape from me."

The princess then took the cotton from her ears, when the bird replied to her, "Brave lady, do not suppose that I wish you any harm, from what I have done in conjunction with those who have made so many efforts to preserve my liberty. Although I am confined within this cage, I am not dissatisfied with my lot; but as I am destined to become a slave, I would rather have you, who have obtained me in so worthy and intrepid a manner, for my mistress, than any other person in the world; and from this moment I swear to you the most inviolable fidelity, and an entire submission to your commands. I know who you are; and I can even tell you more about yourself than you are acquainted with. But the day will come when I shall render you a service, which I trust you will candidly acknowledge. That I may immediately give you some marks of my sincerity, tell me what you wish, and I will obey you."

The acquisition she had made filled the princess with the most inexpressible joy; and the more so, as the attempt had deprived her of two brothers whom she so tenderly loved, and had been productive of so much fatigue and danger to herself—a danger the extent of which she herself was better acquainted with, now it was passed, than when she first undertook the enterprise, notwithstanding everything the dervise had told her. When the bird had finished its speech, the princess said to it "It was my intention, bird, to have informed you that I wished for many things, which are of the greatest consequence to me; and I am therefore highly pleased that you should have prevented my inquiries by the proof you have given of your readiness to oblige me. In the first place, I have understood that there is near here some golden water, possessed of most wonderful properties; you must therefore inform me where it is." The bird pointed out the spot, which was not far distant. The princess went to it, and filled a small silver vessel she had brought with her. She then came back, and said to the bird: "This is not enough; I am in search also of the singing tree—tell me where that is." "Turn round," replied the bird, "and you will see behind you a wood, where you will find this tree." The wood was not far off, and the princess went there, when the harmonious concert she heard made her easily distinguish the tree she was in search of from all the others: but it was both large and lofty. She came back, and said to the bird, "I have discovered the singing tree; but I can neither take it up by the roots, nor even then carry it." "Neither of these is at all necessary," answered the bird; "you need only break off the smallest branch, and carry it with you, to plant in your garden. It will take root soon after it is planted, and will become in a very short time as beautiful and fine a tree as that you have just now seen."

When the princess held in her hand the three things, for which the Mussulman devotee had caused her ardently to desire, she again addressed herself to the bird. "All that you have yet done for me, bird, is not sufficient. You

have been the cause of the death of my two brothers, who are among the black stones which I observed as I ascended; I must carry them back with me." The bird seemed very unwilling to satisfy the princess on this point, and raised the greatest difficulties about it. "Bird," replied the princess, "do you remember that you told me you were my slave—as in fact you are; and your life is at my disposal?" "I cannot deny it," answered the bird, "and although what you request of me is a matter of the greatest difficulty, I will not fail to satisfy you. Cast your eyes round the place where you are, and look if you do not see a pitcher." "I do," said the princess. "Take it, then," answered the bird, "and sprinkle, as you go down, a little of the water it contains upon each of the black stones; and this will be the means of discovering your two brothers."

Princess Parizade took the pitcher, and carried it at the same time the bird in its cage, the silver vessel of water, and branch of the tree. As she began to descend, she threw a little water from the pitcher upon every stone she met with, each of which was directly changed into a man; and as she did not leave a single stone unsprinkled, all the horses, as well as the princess's brothers and the other persons, reappeared. She instantly recognised Prince Bahman and his brother, as they also did her, whom they ran to embrace. "My dear brothers," she exclaimed, after embracing them in her turn, and expressing her astonishment, "what have you been doing here?" When they replied that they were just awakened from a deep sleep. "Perhaps so," she added, "but without me your sleep would have continued most likely to the day of judgment. Do you not recollect that you were in search of the talking bird, the singing tree, and the golden water; and remember also to have seen, on coming here, a great many black stones lying about this place? Look now, and see if there be one remaining." These gentlemen who stand round us and yourselves were these black stones, together with your horses, who now are, as you may observe, waiting for you. And if you wish to know how this miracle has been performed, I must inform you," she added, in showing the pitcher, for which she had now no further occasion, and had therefore set it down at the foot of the mountain, "that it is by virtue of the water of which this pitcher was full, and which I have thrown over each stone. As I did not wish to return without you, after having obtained the talking bird, which you may now see in this cage, and found through that the singing tree, of which this is a branch, and the golden water, of which this vessel is full, I compelled the bird, by means of the power I have acquired over it, to inform me where this pitcher was, and how I ought to make use of it."

Prince Bahman and Prince Perviz were thus informed of the obligation they were under to their sister: the other gentlemen who were collected round her, and who had heard the same speech, were equally conscious how much they were indebted to her; and so far from envying her the acquisition she had made, and to which they had themselves aspired, they thought they could not better show their gratitude for the life she had restored to them, than by declaring themselves her slaves, and ready to do whatever she ordered them.

"Gentlemen," replied the princess, "if you had paid any attention to what I said, you might have remarked that my object in what I have done was to recover my two brothers; it, therefore, you have derived any benefit from me, as you say you have, you at least are not under any obligation to me for it. I feel flattered by the compliment you have had the goodness to pay me, and I thank you for it as I ought. I therefore consider you all as being as much at liberty as you were before your misfortune, and I sincerely rejoice with you in the happiness you experience through my means. But let us not remain any

longer in a place where we have nothing to detain us. Let us remount our horses, and each return to that part of the world whence we came."

The princess set the example by taking her horse, which she found in the very spot where she had left it. Prince Bahman, who wished to give her some assistance, went up to her before she mounted, and requested her to permit him to carry the cage. "This bird, my brother," replied the princess, "is my slave, and I wish to carry it myself; but you may if you please take charge of the branch of the singing tree. Be so good, however, as to hold the cage while I get on horseback." When she had mounted, and Prince Bahman had returned the cage to her, she turned towards Prince Perviz, and added, "You too, brother, shall have the care of the vessel with the golden water in it, if it will not be troublesome to you." Prince Perviz took charge of it with great pleasure.

When the two princes and all the others had mounted their horses, the princess waited for some one of them to put himself at their head, and lead the way. The two princes wished, out of civility, that one of the others would do so; and they on their parts wished the princes to conduct them. As Parizade saw that no one was inclined to assume this honour, but that they all left it for her, she addressed herself to them, and said, "I am waiting, gentlemen, for you to proceed." "Madam," replied one of those who were nearest to her, in the name of the rest, "even if we were ignorant of that deference which is due to your sex, there is no distinction we should not be ready to bestow upon you, after the great benefits we have derived from you, although your great modesty chooses not to assume it to yourself. We entreat you, therefore, not to deprive us any longer of the happiness of following you." "Gentlemen," replied the princess, "I by no means deserve the honour you do me, and if I accept of it, it is only because you wish it." She immediately began to move forward, while the princes her brothers and all the rest followed without any distinction.

They all wished to see the dervise as they went along, to thank him for his kind treatment and the good advice he had given them, of which they had proved the truth; but they found him no longer alive, and they were ignorant whether his death was occasioned by old age, or because he was no longer of any use in pointing out the road, which led to the acquisition of the three things which Princess Parizade had thus obtained.

The troop or company continued their journey; but every day produced a diminution in its numbers. As the different individuals who composed it had come from different countries, they each, after acknowledging to the princess how much they were indebted to her, and taking leave of her and her brothers, continued to depart, as they approached the different roads by which they had come, while Parizade and the princes her brothers continued their journey until they arrived at their own house.

When the princess had placed the cage in the garden on that side on which the saloon was, as soon as the bird began his song, the nightingales, larks, linnets, goldfinches, and a variety of other birds of the country, came to accompany it with their notes. With respect to the branch, she had it planted in her presence, in a particular spot, at a little distance from the house. It immediately took root, and soon grew to a large tree, the leaves of which produced as much harmony, and as full a concert, as the tree from which she had broken it. She also ordered a large basin of beautiful marble to be made in the midst of a flower bed; and when it was finished, she poured into it all the golden water the vessel contained. She immediately saw it increase and bubble up; and when it had filled the basin up to the edge, it rose in the centre like a large fountain, twenty feet in height, and returned again into the basin without overflowing.

The news of these wonders was soon spread over the country, and as the doors, either of the house or garden, were never shut against any one, a great number of people continued to come and admire them.

After a few days, Prince Bahman and Prince Perviz, having quite recovered from the fatigues of their journey, again began to pursue their former mode of life; and as the chase was their usual diversion, they mounted their horses, and went for the first time since their return, not into their park, but to hunt at the distance of two or three leagues from their house. It happened while they were engaged in their sport, that the sultan of Persia accidentally came to hunt in the same spot they had chosen. As soon, therefore, as they perceived by a great number of horsemen that he was about to arrive, they determined to leave off and retire, in order to avoid meeting him. But they took the very road by which he came, and thus met him, and in a part of the road too that was so narrow that they could neither turn one on one side, nor retreat without being seen. Their surprise was so sudden that they had only time to dismount and prostrate themselves to the earth, without even raising their heads to look at him. But the sultan, who saw that they were well mounted, and as handsomely and properly dressed as if they had belonged to his court, felt some curiosity to see their faces. He therefore stopped and ordered them to rise.

The princes got up and remained standing before the sultan in a manner so unrestrained and easy, yet unassuming and modest, that the sultan was rather surprised. He observed them in an earnest manner for some time without speaking. After having admired their open countenance and good manners, he inquired their names, and asked where they lived. "We are, sire," replied Prince Bahman, who took upon himself to answer, "the sons of the superintendent of your majesty's gardens, I mean of him who died last; and we live in a house which he built for us a short time before his death, that we might continue there until we arrived at an age capable of being of use to your majesty, and of going to request some employment when a proper occasion presented itself." "From what I now observe," said the sultan, "you seem fond of hunting." "It is our customary amusement, sire," answered Prince Bahman; "and which not one of your majesty's subjects who is destined to bear arms ought to neglect, at least if he conforms to the ancient customs of the kingdom." The sultan was delighted with this intelligent answer, and added, "Since that is the case, I shall be happy to see you hunt. Come with me and choose the sort of hunting you like best."

The princes remounted their horses and followed the sultan. They had not proceeded very far when various kinds of beasts came into view at the same time. Prince Bahman chose a lion, and Prince Perviz a bear. They both began the attack with an intrepidity and ardour that astonished the sultan. They got up to their beasts almost at the same time, and threw their javelins with so much skill that they pierced them through and through, and the sultan saw both the lion and the bear fall dead at their feet, nearly at the same instant. Without taking any rest, Prince Bahman now pursued a bear and Prince Perviz a lion, and in a few moments these were also extended lifeless on the ground. They even wished to continue the sport, but the sultan prevented them; and having called them back, when they came up by the side of him, he said, "If I were to suffer you to go on, you would soon destroy all my hunting. It is not, however, so much on that account as for the sake of yourselves, whose life will from this time continue very dear to me, because I am persuaded that your courage will one day become as useful to me as your society will be agreeable."

The sultan Khosrouschah, in short, felt so strong a regard for the two princes that he invited them to his palace, and even wished them to return with him.

"Sire," replied Prince Bahman, "your majesty honours us in a manner we are undeserving of, and we beg of you to dispense with our attendance." The sultan could not comprehend what motives the princes could have for refusing to accept of such a strong mark of his favour as he thus showed them; he therefore asked them the reason. "Sire," answered Prince Bahman, "we have a sister, who is younger than ourselves, with whom we live in so united and happy a manner, that we cannot undertake any plan without first consulting her; as she, on her part, never does anything without asking our advice." "I rejoice to hear of this fraternal union," said the sultan; "go, then, and consult your sister, and return to-morrow to hunt with me, and then bring back your answer."

The two princes returned home, but neither of them thought any more of this adventure; not only of having met the sultan and had the honour of hunting with him, but also of speaking to their sister respecting his wish for them to go to the palace with him without returning home. The next morning, when they were with the sultan, he said to them, "Well, have you spoken to your sister, and does she consent to my having the pleasure of enjoying your society in a more agreeable manner?" The princes looked at each other, while the colour rushed into their cheeks. "Sire," replied Prince Bahman, "we entreat your majesty to excuse us; but, in truth, neither my brother nor myself thought of it." "Do not then forget it to-day," answered the sultan, "and remember to bring me an answer to-morrow."

The princes again forgot the sultan's commands, and yet he was not angry with them for their negligence; and instead of being so, he took out three little gold balls, which he had in a purse, and putting them into Prince Bahman's bosom he said, with a smile on his countenance, "These balls will prevent you from forgetting a third time to do what my regard for you makes me so much wish; the noise they will make this evening in falling out of your clothes will put you in mind of it, if you should not have remembered it before."

The event turned out exactly as the sultan predicted; for without the three balls of gold, the princes would again have forgotten to mention the matter to their sister Parizade. But as Prince Bahman took off his girdle, when he was preparing to retire to rest, the balls fell on the ground. He therefore went immediately to find Prince Perviz, and they both proceeded to the apartment of their sister who was not yet gone to bed. They asked her pardon for coming to disturb her at such an unseasonable hour, and then informed her of all the circumstances that had occurred in the several meetings with the sultan.

Princess Parizade was very much alarmed at this intelligence. "Your accidental meeting with the sultan," she said to them, "is both fortunate and honourable for you, and in the end may be very advantageous, but to me it is truly melancholy and distressing. I see very well that it is on my account you have withstood the wishes of the sultan, and I feel highly obliged to you for it. I am sure, therefore, that your regard perfectly equals my own. You would rather, if I may so speak, be guilty of an incivility towards the sultan, and refuse his kind invitation, as you must yourself own it to be, than act in opposition to that fraternal union we have sworn to preserve; and you have supposed, that if you once begin to see and visit him, you will in the end be insensibly obliged to abandon me, and give yourselves up entirely to him. But do you think it will be so easy a matter absolutely to refuse the sultan in a point he seems so anxious to obtain? It is dangerous to oppose the wishes of sultans. If, therefore, I were to follow my inclination, and dissuade you from complying with what he requires of you, I should only expose you to his resentment, and at the same time make myself equally miserable. You see then, what my

opinion is ; before, however, we absolutely determine, let us consult the talking bird, and hear what that will advise. The bird has a great degree both of penetration and forecast, and has promised us his assistance in any difficulties we may meet with."

Princess Parizadè ordered the cage to be brought, and after explaining to the bird, in the presence of the princes, the embarrassment they were in, she asked what was most proper for them to do in this perplexing situation. To this question the bird thus replied : "The princes your brothers must comply with the wishes of the sultan, and even in their turn invite him to come and see your house." "But, bird," said the princess, "my brothers and I have such a strong and unequalled attachment to each other, that we are afraid our affectionate union will suffer from this mode of proceeding." "It will not, however, in the least," answered the bird ; "but will even become stronger." "But in this case," added the princess, "will not the sultan see me?" "It is necessary that he should see you," replied the bird ; "and everything will be the better for it."

Prince Bahman and Prince Perviz returned to the chase the next morning, and the sultan asked them, as soon as they were near enough to hear him, if they had spoken to their sister. Prince Bahman then approached, and answered, "Your majesty, she, may dispose of us as you please, we are ready to obey you. We not only had no difficulty in obtaining our sister's consent, but she even chid us for having observed such a deference for her opinion, in what it was our duty only to attend to your majesty. But she is so worthy of our affection, that if we have done wrong, we entreat your majesty's pardon." "Do not let this matter give you a moment's uneasiness," replied the sultan, "so far from being offended at what you have done, I very much approve of it; and I hope you will have for my person the same deference and attachment, as far as I can obtain any part of your friendship." The princes were quite confused at the great goodness and condescension of the sultan, and they could only answer him by inclining their heads almost to the ground, in order to show him the great respect with which they accepted his kindness.

Contrary to his usual custom, the sultan continued his sport but for a short time. For as he conjectured that the princes possessed not a less cultivated and refined mind than they did a daring and intrepid disposition, he was impatient to converse with them more at his ease, and therefore hastened his return home. As they proceeded towards the capital, he wished them to keep by his side, an honour which excited the jealousy not only of the principal courtiers who accompanied him, but even of the grand vizier himself, who was extremely mortified at seeing them take the lead.

When the sultan arrived at his capital, the attention of all the people, who lined the streets, was entirely taken up with looking at Prince Bahman and Prince Perviz; asking every one who they were, and whether they were foreigners or natives. "Let that, however, be as it will," exclaimed some of them, "I wish to God the sultan had given us two princes so handsome and well-looking as these are. They would have been nearly of this age if the sultana, who has been suffering so tedious a punishment, had been fortunate as a mother."

The first thing the sultan did when he arrived at the palace was to carry the princes through the principal apartments, upon the beauty and richness of which they bestowed appropriate praise, as well as on the furniture and ornaments, and the symmetry that ran through the whole, without affectation, and like persons possessed of good taste. A splendid repast was served up, and the sultan made them sit at the same table with himself. They desired indeed to be excused, but at last obeyed the sultan, as he said it was his particular wish.

The sultan, who possessed a very good understanding, and had made a considerable progress in the different sciences, particularly in history, naturally supposed that the princes, either through their modesty or respect, would not take the liberty of beginning any particular conversation with him. In order, therefore, to relieve them from this restraint, he began one himself, and continued to converse during the repast. Upon whatever subject, however, he spoke, they showed such a variety of knowledge, wit, discrimination, and judgment, that he was quite astonished at their abilities and acquirements. "If they had been my own children," he said to himself, "and had received all the advantages of education that I could have given them, with such an understanding as they have, they could not have been more intelligent or better instructed." He in short felt such a pleasure from their conversation, that after remaining even longer at table than he was wont, on getting up he took them into his cabinet, where he again conversed with them for a considerable time. "I should never have supposed," said the sultan, addressing them, "that there were any young men among my subjects who resided in the country, that possessed so fine an understanding, and were so well educated. I have never in all my life held a conversation that has afforded me so much pleasure as this has done; but it is time to conclude it, and let you enjoy some of the amusements of my court; and as nothing is more capable of affording a relaxation to the mind than music, we will now go and hear a concert, both vocal and instrumental, which you will not find at all unpleasant or disagreeable."

When he had finished his speech, the musicians, who had already received their orders, came in, and perfectly answered by their skill the expectations that had been excited. This concert was succeeded by some excellent buffoons, while troops of dancers of both sexes concluded the entertainment.

As the two princes observed the evening approaching, they prostrated themselves at the sultan's feet, and requested his leave to retire, after having returned him their thanks for the great goodness and honour with which he had treated them; when, on taking leave of them, the sultan said, "I permit you to go; but remember that I have conducted you to the palace myself only to show you the road, that you may for the future come of your own accord. You will be always welcome, and the oftener you come, the more pleasure you will afford me." Before they left the sultan, Prince Bahman thus addressed him: "If we might, sire, take such a liberty, we would entreat your majesty to do our sister and ourselves the honour, the first time the diversion of hunting leads you into our neighbourhood, to stop and rest yourself at our house. It is not indeed worthy of receiving you, but monarchs do not sometimes disdain to rest themselves in a cottage." "The house of such persons as you are," replied the sultan, "cannot but be excellent, and worthy of yourselves. I shall visit it with great pleasure, and be still more rejoiced at being the guest of you and your sister, for whom I even now, before I see her, feel a considerable regard, by the report you have given of her good qualities. I will not, therefore, deny myself this satisfaction even longer than the day after to-morrow. Early in the morning, I will not fail to be at the same spot where I well remember to have first met you: do you also be present, and become my guides."

Prince Bahman and Prince Perviz returned home the same evening, and related to their sister, on their arrival, the kind and honourable reception the sultan had given them; and they then informed her, that they had not neglected to request him to honour their house with his presence, whenever he passed near it; and that in answer he had not only agreed to it, but appointed the day after to-morrow for his visit.

"If that be the case," answered the princess, "we must think of preparing a repast that may not be unworthy of his majesty; and in order to do this, I think it will be right to consult the talking bird, that perhaps will inform us of some dish which may please the sultan's taste better than any other." As her brothers agreed to whatever she thought proper, the princess went and consulted the bird by herself, when they were gone to bed. "Bird," she said, "the sultan does us the honour of visiting us the day after to-morrow, to see our house; and as we ought to entertain him, pray tell me in what manner we must acquit ourselves, and how he will be best pleased." "My good mistress," replied the bird, "you have excellent cooks, who will, of course, do their best; but above all things let them set out a dish of cucumbers with pearl sauce, which must be placed before the sultan in the first course, in preference to every other dish."

"Cucumbers dressed with pearls!" exclaimed the princess with astonishment; "you do not know what you are talking about, bird; there never was such a dish heard of. The sultan, indeed, might admire it for its magnificence, but he sits at a table for the purpose of eating, and not to look at pearls. Besides, if I were to employ all the pearls I have, there would not be sufficient to make such a dish." "Mistress," replied the bird, "be so good as to do as I say, and do not make yourself uneasy about the event, nothing but good will arise from it. And with respect to the pearls, do you go very early to-morrow, and at the foot of the first tree in your park, on the right hand, turn up the earth, and you will find more than you will have any occasion for."

Princess Parizade desired the gardener to be informed the same evening to hold himself in readiness, and very early the next morning she took him with her, and went to the tree which the bird had pointed out. When the gardener had dug down to a certain depth, he observed something to rest the spade, and immediately discovered a gold box, about a foot square, which he pointed out to the princess. "It was for this tree I brought you here," replied the princess; "proceed, and take care you do not injure it with your spade."

The gardener at last got out the box, and put it into the hands of the princess; and as it was only fastened by small clasps, Parizade easily opened it. She found it quite full of pearls, of a moderate size, all alike, and very proper for the purpose for which she wanted them. Well satisfied at having found this little treasure, she shut the box, put it under her arm, and returned to the house, while the gardener filled up the hole with the earth, and left it in the same state as before.

As Prince Bahman and Prince Perviz had seen the princess in the garden much earlier than usual, while they were dressing in their rooms, they went together, as soon as they had finished, to meet her. They perceived her in the middle of the garden, and observed at a distance that she was carrying something under her arm. When, on approaching her, they found it was a small gold box, they were very much surprised. "Sister," said one of the princes in accosting her, "you carried nothing out with you, when we saw you go along, followed by the gardener, and now you have a gold box in your hand! Is it a treasure that the gardener discovered, and came to inform you of?" "My dear brother," replied the princess, "it is the very reverse. It was I who took the gardener to the spot where the box was, and where, when I had shown it him, I made him dig up the earth. And you will be still more astonished at my good luck when you shall see what it contains."

The princess then opened the box, and her brothers were much struck when they saw that it was full of pearls, not perhaps very rich from their size, when individually considered, but of great value, both from their quantity and goodness. They inquired by what accident she had become acquainted with this

treasure. "If you have no business of any consequence to take you anywhere else," replied Parizadè to her brothers, "come with me, and I will inform you." "What business of importance," said Prince Perviz, "can we have that ought to prevent us from knowing what seems so much to interest you?"

Princess Parizadè then proceeded towards the house with her brothers on each side, and as she went along she related to them the consultation she had with the bird, as had been before agreed upon between them: the questions she put, and the answers the bird gave; of the objection she made to the dish of cucumbers with pearl sauce; of the means the bird had pointed out, and of the place it had mentioned where she was to go and find the gold box. The princess and her brothers meditated a long time upon the reasons, and endeavoured to discover the motive of the bird in wishing to have such a dish prepared for the sultan, and in having also pointed out the means of procuring it. After, however, a great deal of conversation on the subject, they acknowledged they could make nothing out, but they determined to follow the advice and direction of the bird in every particular, and not to omit a single thing.

When she went into the house, the princess ordered the chief cook to come to her apartment, and when she had given him all the orders for the repast with which she intended to entertain the sultan, she added, "Besides what I have now said, you must prepare one dish for the sultan's particular taste, and no person but yourself must assist in its preparation. And this is a dish of cucumbers with pearl sauce." She then opened the box and showed him the pearls.

At this speech, the chief cook, who had never before heard of such a dish, stepped back two or three paces, and proved by his countenance how much he was astonished. The princess easily conjectured the reason. "I see very well," she added, "that you think me very foolish in ordering such a dish, which you have never heard of before, and which, it may be even said, has never yet been made. All this is very true, and I know it as well as yourself. But I know what I am about, and I am aware of the nature of the order I give you. Do you go, therefore, and find it out. Take the box and do your best. If there are more pearls than you want, bring me back what remain." The chief cook made no answer, but took the box and carried it away. Princess Parizadè then went on and gave her orders to have everything put in its best state, and properly arranged, both in the house and garden, in order to afford the sultan a more worthy reception.

The princes set off rather early the next morning to meet the sultan, and were at the appointed place when he arrived. He then began to hunt, and continued the chase with great eagerness, till the sun, which now approached its highest elevation, obliged him to desist. And then Prince Perviz put himself at the head of the company to show the way, while Prince Bahman accompanied the sultan. When they were come within sight of the house, Prince Perviz pushed forward, in order to inform Princess Parizadè of the sultan's arrival; but the attendants of the princess, whom she had placed at some distance on the road for that purpose, had already acquainted her with it, and the prince found her waiting, and ready to receive him.

When the sultan arrived, and had entered the court, where he dismounted close to the vestibule, Princess Parizadè presented herself and fell at his feet; her brothers, who were present, informed the sultan who she was, and requested him to accept the homage she rendered him. The sultan stooped down in order to assist the princess in rising, and after looking at her for some time, and admiring her beauty, which quite dazzled him, as well as the elegance of her form, and a certain gracefulness of manner which did not at all bespeak a country life, "Here," he exclaimed, "are two brothers worthy of their sister, and a sister equally worthy of her brothers; and to judge from what I see, I am

no longer surprised that such brothers wish to do nothing without the advice and consent of such a sister; and I hope, from what she appears to me at first sight, to become better acquainted with her when I shall have looked over the house."

The princess then spoke, "This, sire, must be considered only as a country house, and suited to such as we are, who pass our lives at a distance from the great world. It possesses nothing worthy of being compared with the residences in cities, and still less with the magnificent palaces belonging to sultans!" "I cannot," replied the sultan in an obliging manner, "be entirely of your opinion. What I have already seen makes me form strong expectations of what I am going to view. I will, however, reserve my judgment until you have shown me the whole. Proceed therefore, and point out the way."

The princess passing by the saloon, took the sultan through all the apartments, and after having examined each of them very attentively, and admired their variety, "Do you call this, my beautiful lady," he exclaimed, "a country house? The finest and most magnificent cities would be very soon deserted if all country houses resembled yours. I am no longer astonished that you are so well pleased with your situation, and despise the city. Let me also see your garden, for I have no doubt it will answer to the beauty of the house."

Princess Parizadè then opened the door that led into the garden, where the first thing that attracted the sultan's eyes was the fountain of yellow water, resembling liquid gold. Surprised at so new and unexpected an appearance, he looked at it for some time with marks of the greatest admiration. "Whence comes this wonderful water, with which I am so delighted? Whence is its source, and by what contrivance does it rise in a way that seems to me more extraordinary than anything in the whole world? I must examine it more nearly." And as he said this, he went forward. The princess continued to conduct him on, and at last led him to the place where the singing tree was planted.

As he approached it, the sultan heard a concert very different from any he was acquainted with; he stopped and cast his eyes round for the musicians, but he could not see any either far or near, yet he continued to hear a concert that delighted him. "Where," he exclaimed, "are the performers I hear? Are they under the earth, or in the air, invisible? With such delightful and charming voices as they possess, they would risk nothing by being seen, but on the contrary afford only pleasure." "They are not musicians, sire," replied the princess, with a smile, "that form the concert which you hear: it is the tree which your majesty sees before you, that produces it: and if you will give yourself the trouble to go three or four steps forward, you will be sure of it, as the voices will be more distinct."

The sultan went forward, and was so charmed with the sweet harmony of the concert, that he could not break off his attention. He at last recollected that he had seen the golden water not far off; and then addressed Parizadè in these words: "Tell me, I entreat you, whether you accidentally found this wonderful tree in your garden; whether it is a present that was made you; or whether you have had it brought from any distant country? It must, indeed, most assuredly come from a considerable distance, otherwise I, who am so curious about such natural rarities, must have heard it mentioned. By what name is it known?"

"Sire," replied the princess, "this tree is known by no other name than the singing tree; and it does not grow in this country. It would occupy too long a time to relate the adventure by which it was placed here. It is a history that is connected with the golden water and the talking bird, both of which were brought here at the same time; and your majesty is going to see the last of them, when you have looked at the golden water as long as you wish. It will

be agreeable to you, I shall have the honour of giving an account of them when you shall have rested yourself, and recovered from the labours of the chase, and the additional fatigue you have given yourself during the great heat of the sun."

"I feel none of the fatigue you mention," said the sultan, "so amply am I repaid by the wonderful things you show me. Rather say, that I pay no attention to the trouble I give you. Let us then make an end, and again go and see the golden water. I am already full of anxiety also to behold and admire the talking bird."

When the sultan came to the golden water, he continued to look at it for a long time, particularly at the fountain, which never ceased to rise in the air in such a wonderful manner, and again to fall into the basin. "As you have told me," said the sultan, addressing Parizade, "that this water has no source, and comes from no place in the neighbourhood through pipes laid in the ground, I must at least conclude that it is foreign, like the singing tree."

"The matter is, sire," replied the princess, "exactly as your majesty supposes; and to prove to you that this water comes from no other place I must inform you that this basin is made out of a single stone, and therefore it can come in neither through the bottom nor sides; and what makes this water the more remarkable is, that I only put a very small vessel of it into the basin, and that, through a property which is peculiar to it, it rises up as you see." The sultan at last left the basin. "Well," said he, as he went away, "this is enough for the first time, but I promise myself the pleasure of coming here very often. Take me now to see the talking bird."

As they approached the saloon, the sultan perceived a great multitude of birds upon the trees, each of which filled the air with its peculiar song. He inquired on what account they thus collected all together in this place in preference to the other parts of the garden, where he had neither seen nor heard a single one. "Sire," replied Parizade, "the reason is, that they all come here to accompany the talking bird. Your majesty may perceive it in its cage upon one of the windows of the saloon, into which we are now going. And if you will pay attention to it you will discover also that it sings far more melodiously than all the other birds, not excepting even the nightingale, which does not come near it in excellence."

The sultan then went into the saloon, while the bird continued to sing. "My slave," said the princess, addressing the bird, and raising her voice, "do you not see the sultan? Pay your compliments to him." The bird immediately ceased from singing, on which the other birds were also silent. "The sultan," said the bird, "is welcome, and may God cause him to prosper, and prolong his life for many years." As the repast was served up on a sofa near the window where the bird was, the sultan, on sitting down to the table, replied, "I thank you, bird, for your compliment, and am delighted to see in you the sultan and king of birds."

The sultan, who perceived a dish of cucumbers near him, which he supposed to be dressed in the usual manner, drew it towards him with his hand, and was astonished to see them dressed with pearls. "What novelty is this?" he cried. "Why have a sauce with pearls? They are not fit to eat." He looked both at the princes and their sister as if to demand an explanation, but the bird interrupted him. "Can your majesty be in so great a surprise at seeing cucumbers dressed with pearls, when you could so easily give credit to the account that the sultana your consort was delivered of a dog, a cat, and a piece of wood?" "I thought so," replied the sultan, "because the attending women assured me of the fact." "These women," answered the bird, "were the sultana's sisters; but they were sisters who were jealous of the honour and happiness you had bestowed upon her in preference to themselves, and to

appease their rage they abused your majesty's good nature. They will confess their crime, if you question them. The two brothers and the sister whom you behold are your children, whom they exposed, but who were found by the superintendent of your gardens, and who were nursed and educated through his care and kindness."

This speech of the bird instantly made the sultan comprehend the whole plan. "I have no difficulty, bird," replied he, "in giving full credit to what your speech has discovered to me. The strong inclination that attracted me towards them, the affection I already feel for them, both tell me most plainly they are my off-spring. Come then, my children, and let me embrace you all, and give you the first proof of my tender love as a father." He rose and embraced them all three, mingling his tears with theirs. "This is not enough, my children," he exclaimed; "you must also embrace each other, not as the offspring of the superintendent of my gardens, to whom I am under an everlasting obligation for having preserved your lives, but as belonging to me, as sprung from the blood royal of Persia, of which I am persuaded you will well support the glory."

When the two princes and their sister had mutually embraced each other with a new-felt ardour, as the sultan wished, he sat down to table with them and pressed them to eat. When he had finished, he said, "In my person, my children, you behold your father; to-morrow I will bring you the sultana your mother; prepare therefore to receive her."

The sultan mounted his horse and returned with the utmost diligence to the capital. The first thing he did on dismounting and entering his palace was to order the grand vizier to make all possible haste and draw up an accusation against the two sisters of the sultana. They were arrested, carried from their own houses, and separately interrogated; they applied the torture, convicted, and condemned them to be quartered. The whole of this was performed in less than an hour.

In the mean time Sultan Khosrouschah, followed by his whole court, went on foot to the gate of the great mosque, and after having taken the sultana out of the narrow prison with his own hand, in which she had languished for so many years and suffered so much, "Madam," he cried, embracing her at the same time with tears in his eyes, at seeing the wretched state she was in "I am come to implore your pardon for the injustice I have done you, and to make you all the reparation that is so justly due to you from me. I have already begun it by the punishment of those who have seduced me by so abominable an imposture, and I hope you will consider it as completed when I shall have presented you with two accomplished princes and an amiable and charming princess, all of whom are our own offspring. Come, then, and resume the rank which belongs to you, with every honour that is your due."

This reparation was made before a multitude of people, who had collected in crowds from every part on the first report of what was going forward, the knowledge of which was very soon spread all over the city.

Very early the next morning, the sultan and sultana, the latter of whom had changed her dress of humiliation and affliction which she had worn the preceding day for the most magnificent robes, such as suited her rank, followed by all the court in regular order, set out for the house of their children. When they were arrived, and as soon as they had alighted, the sultan presented the sultana to Prince Bahman, Prince Perviz, and Princess Parizade. "Behold, madam," he exclaimed, "your two sons and your daughter. Embrace them with the same tenderness and affection I have done, for they are worthy of us both." During this affecting introduction, tears, but they were those of joy, fell in abundance from the eyes of all, but chiefly from the sultana, from the

excess of her feelings at embracing three children who had been the cause of her long and severe afflictions.

The two princes and the princess had prepared a most magnificent repast for the sultan, sultana, and all the court. They then sat down at table, and after the repast was finished, the sultan carried the sultana into the garden, where he pointed out to her the singing tree and the fine effect of the golden water. She had already seen the bird in its cage in the saloon, in praise of which the sultan spoke very highly during the repast.

When nothing remained to detain the sultan any longer, he mounted his horse. Prince Bahman accompanied him on his right and Prince Perviz on his left, while the sultana, with the princess on her left hand, followed the sultan. In this order, with some of the officers of the court preceding and others following them, each according to his rank, they pursued the road to the capital. As they approached the city, the people came out in crowds, even to some distance from the gates, and they looked as much at the sultana, and rejoiced with her at her happy change after so long a penance, as they did at the two princes and the princess, and they accompanied them with the loudest acclamations. Their attention was also attracted by the bird in its cage, which the princess carried before her. They could not but admire its singing, by which also it attracted all the other birds round it, and which kept following it, perching upon the trees in the country and on the roofs of the houses as they passed along the streets.

In this magnificent and joyful manner Prince Bahman, Prince Perviz, and Princess Parizade, were all conducted to the palace, and in the evening the most brilliant illumination and greatest rejoicings took place, all of which continued for many days, not only in the palace but throughout the city.

The sultan of the Indies could not but admire the great memory of the sultana his consort, which seemed inexhaustible, and thus continued to furnish fresh amusement every night by means of so many diverting tales.

A thousand and one nights had passed in this innocent amusement, which had thus very much tended to diminish his cruel determination and horrid prejudice against the fidelity of wives. His mind became softened, and he was convinced of the great merit and good sense of the sultana Scheherazade. He well recollected the courage with which she voluntarily exposed herself in becoming his queen, without at all dreading the death to which she knew she was destined the next morning, like those who had preceded her.

These considerations, added to the excellent qualities which he knew she possessed, at last urged him absolutely to pardon her. "I am well aware," he said, "amiable Scheherazade, that it is impossible to exhaust the store of pleasant and amusing tales with which you have so long entertained me. You have at length appeased my wrath, and I freely renounce in your favour the cruel law I had imposed upon myself. I receive you entirely into my good graces, and wish you to be considered as the liberator of all the females who would have otherwise been sacrificed to my just resentment."

The sultana threw herself at his feet, embraced them most tenderly, and gave every proof of the most heartfelt and lively gratitude.

The grand vizier learnt this delightful intelligence from the sultan himself. It was immediately reported through the city and different provinces, and it brought down upon the heads of Sultan Schahriah and his amiable sultana Scheherazade the united praises and grateful blessings of all the people of the empire of the Indies.

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